

MAXIMUM KING!

Written by

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A Sorta True Story

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INT. BATHROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON a line of cocaine. A crazy long line of cocaine, long enough to kill a man, to kill an elephant.

A NOSE DESCENDS INTO FRAME. A ROLLED UP 100 DOLLAR BILL.

SSSSSSSSNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNOOOOOOOOOOOOOOORRRRRRRRRRTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTT

THE COCAINE DISAPPEARS INSIDE THIS GUY. We still don't see his face.

FROM BEHIND -- This dude jumps up and down three times, pumps a fist in the air, AND SPRINTS OUT OF THE BATHROOM.

SUPER: 1985

INT. OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

EXTREME CLOSE UP on the face of a big, lanky, slightly puffy-faced dude.

An unflattering bowl haircut that you can't look away from. Obnoxiously wide 1980s glasses -- the kind of glasses your dad is always wearing in old photographs. Brimming with nerves and energy, this *has* to be the guy who just did all that cocaine.

It also happens to be the preeminent STEPHEN KING (36).

LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN THE BARREL OF THE CAMERA, he opens his mouth.

Everything he says spills out in a SLIGHTLY NASAL VOICE -- at the speed you would expect from the prior coke intake.

STEPHEN KING

Okay. Okay, so, get this. How do you follow it up, right? That's what I'm thinking, that's what I'm thinking, you get an idea about a haunted hotel and then BAM you write it, million dollars, movie deal, movie was shit, who cares, what's next, no, NO, what's before that, girl at a prom, blood everywhere, BAM another hit, they keep coming, they keep coming. Vampires BAM, million. *The Stand*, THE FUCKING STAND, are you kidding, got three hundred pages of that thing still sitting in a drawer hasn't ever seen the light of day.

(MORE)

STEPHEN KING (CONT'D)

Little girl fuckin' BAM ZING BOOM
blowing shit up with her mind, WITH
HER MIND! What's next, what's after
that, the dog, right, I wrote the
one with the dog, oh, people liked
that, people fucking LOVED that,
it's insidious, it speaks to the
minds of, of people's- what? Right,
this is what I'm saying, we got a
car, not a normal car, it's fucking
killing people, all over the place,
over here, over there, a little
kid's cat comes back to life, no,
that's not enough, is it, HE comes
back to life, you remember that
one, Dan, you remember the reviews,
the critics weren't so on board for
that, called me "twisted," well,
maybe I am, ha ha ha, don't even
get me started about, okay, you
know the one with the Gunslinger,
oh, there's a sequel to that coming
down the pipes, maybe two, maybe
SEVEN, you're not gonna believe
where that shit's gonna go, so,
here's what I'm saying. What I'm
saying is, a decade ago I lived in
a trailer, but look at me now,
bing, bang, boom, here I am, and
the question is how do you follow
it up? Well, here's what I'm saying
is, I got it, I know how you follow
it up. How you follow it up is...

A brief pause. A slight reprieve from this coked-out rant.
Then--

STEPHEN KING (CONT'D)

Picture it, Dan, picture it.
There's a guy, right, a normal man,
well, mostly, he's got a wife, a
daughter, but he's a fat fucking
pig of a man, oinky oink, takes his
body for granted, takes everything
for granted, then one day he's
driving down the street with his
wife and his wife is fuckin',
fucking and sucking, sucking him
off, right? So where's his mind at,
it's not on the road, that's for
sure, and then BAM! Hits a gypsy.
He hits. A gypsy. With his car.

(MORE)

STEPHEN KING (CONT'D)

Then this other fucking gypsy, she looks at him, she's like, "Thinner." She whispers it, whispers a curse, so he starts losing weight, right, starts losing it real slow at first. And at first he's like, great, drop some pounds, please the wife, but it keeps happening, skinnier and skinnier, oh no, what does he do, finds a friend, tracks this bitch down, right, BOOM, friend gets shot! Shot through the hand! And how does it end, how does it all end, that's what you're asking, right, that's what you're wondering? Three words. Magic. Fucking. Pie. A murder pie, if you will, and why wouldn't you? But the wrong people eat it, his wife, his daughter, they eat it by accident, this man, this skinny fucker, he crumbles into despair and THAT. IS HOW. YOU WRITE. AN ENDING. Boom fuck you very much whaddya think?

Sitting dumbfounded at a desk across from Steve is the guy who's been privy to all this -- DAN JANSEN (40).

A plaque on his desk bears his name and the title "Literary Agent." Dan takes a moment to collect himself.

DAN

How are things, Steve? Wife, kids okay?

STEVE

Yeah, yeah, the wife's great, both - no, all three of the kids, doing great, but the idea, Dan, the idea, what do you think?

DAN

You want to write a book... about a gypsy who curses a fat guy to lose weight?

STEVE

No, no, well, yeah, but not, I don't want to write it, I WROTE it.

DAN

You already--

Steve produces a thick manuscript -- seemingly from nowhere -- and slams it down onto Dan's desk.

STEVE

There it is, signed, sealed,
delivered.

As Dan picks it up, flips through it wearily--

STEVE (CONT'D)

But this one, the thing is, this one's a little darker than true blue Steve, so I think this one's gonna be a Bachman Book, you hear that, Dan, put it out under Bachman's name.

DAN

You don't just wanna ship it out under your name and sell a hundred times more copies? Because people are gonna find out about the Bachman thing eventually--

STEVE

Nope, Bachman, it's a Bachman, are we in this for the money or are we in this for the art?

Dan is visibly not 100% sure how to answer.

DAN

I... yeah, okay, I'll give it to Suzy for proofing.

STEVE

Right, Suzy, I forgot about Suzy, I forgot about proofing, isn't that funny, how the mind lets go of things sometimes?

DAN

Yeah, listen, Steve, the reason I wanted to talk to you--

STEVE

About the book, right?

DAN

What?

STEVE

I came in to talk about the book, remember? *Thinner*?

DAN

Steve, I called you in here, I didn't know about the book until forty seconds ago.

STEVE

Right, yeah, that's right. Sure. So what can I do for you?

DAN

It's... Okay, it's an offer. A new opportunity.

STEVE

Lay it on me.

DAN

Before I do, just promise me you'll think it through. I relocated to Maine to manage *you* specifically, and we've got a good thing going here, I just want to make sure we don't jump into anything over our heads.

STEVE

Lay it the fuck on me, brotha'.

DAN

Dino de Laurentiis's people reached out.

STEVE

How is Dino, what's up with Dino, the residuals on *Cat's Eye* rolling in yet?

DAN

Not so much. Look, they want you to direct a movie. Based on one of your own books. I mean it's no secret that some of the adaptations of your work have been a little, well--

STEVE

Shitty, Dan, the word you're looking for is shitty.

DAN

Right, so Dino's idea was that you might want to do it yourself. Make sure it's done right, I guess.

STEVE

Shit, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't intrigued. If I did it myself...

DAN

Do you know anything about directing?

STEVE

No but how hard can it be, I mean--

Steve glances at his giant dorky watch.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Oh fuck. I gotta run. Walk with me.

Steve stands and leaves with no warning. Dan SIGHS, gets up, and follows him out.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

Steve and Dan exit the building. Steve walks to his car, a shitbox old Honda. He's past due for an upgrade.

STEVE

It's an intriguing idea, that's for sure. Tell Dino I'll think about it. And give me your thoughts on *Thinner*, I think people are gonna really dig this one.

Steve waves goodbye to Dan, walks to his car, gets in. Seconds later AC/DC music *BEGINS TO BLARE FROM THE CAR*.

The car JERKS FORWARDS and zooms recklessly out of the parking lot.

A car driving down the street swerves to avoid hitting him. HORNS BLARE.

SUZY (40s), Dan's co-worker, exits the building and stands next to Dan.

SUZY

How's our guy doing?

DAN

He just turned in a book about a gypsy who curses a fat guy to lose weight. How do you think he's doing?

INT. STEVE'S SHITBOX CAR - SAME TIME

Steve drives down the street. He looks to his right and JOLTS in his seat.

A TALL, BLACK-ROBED, MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY LOOKING-DUDE sits in the passenger seat. Handsome face-- but evil lurks behind the eyes. As his clothes would suggest, this is THE MAN IN BLACK.

Astute readers will recognize him as King's ultimate villainous creation -- Big Bad from THE STAND, THE DARK TOWER, etc. That's right -- King is literally having hallucinations of his fictional characters.

The Man in Black glares at Steve for a long, cold moment -- gazing into his soul.

INT. STEVE'S SHITBOX CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Steve does a bump of coke off of the back of his own hand.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Steve's shitbox car ZOOMS BACK INTO DAN'S PARKING LOT from the other direction -- he's circled the block.

The window rolls down. Steve sticks his head out and YELLS AT DAN AND SUZY as the car passes back through the parking lot without stopping.

STEVE

I circled around because I had a thought! I want to do it! I want to do the movie! Tell Dino I'm onboard, but only if I write the script myself! The whole thing! Tell him I'll have him the script in two weeks! No, three months! No, fifteen days! No, three weeks! I'm gonna do it, Dan! I'm gonna make the greatest fucking movie the world has ever seen!

Steve ZOOMS back into the street. ANOTHER CAR swerves to avoid hitting him. Dan and Suzy watch him go.

SUZY

Didn't his wife give him an intervention five years ago?

DAN
Yeah. But you know Steve. He's
never been a quitter.

Suzy looks at Dan, who looks hopelessly out at the street.
Steve's car disappears in the distance.

EXT. BANGOR, MAINE - SAME TIME

Steve's car cruises through the streets of Bangor, Maine.

Steve glances over at the passenger seat. The Man in Black
continues to glare at Steve -- then the glare vanishes. He
gives Steve an approving nod.

Steve smiles back at him, then turns and looks at the street
again. He grins, WHOOPS, and drives off down the road.

SUPER: "This is a sort of true and sort of made up story. I
mean it's true but it's sort of embellished. For, you know,
dramatic effect."

SUPER: "Sorry, Stephen King."

EXT. SCHOOL BUILDING - DAY

Steve's car SCREECHES to a stop in front of a high school.

INT. SCHOOL BUILDING - DAY

Steve walks down the hall of a middle school. Kids WHISPER TO
EACH OTHER and move to the sides of the hall as he walks.
Steve stops and looks at a KID (13) who's staring at him.

STEVE
BOO!

KID
Ah!

The kid cowers. Steve LAUGHS and keeps walking. JOE KING (12)
sees Steve and runs up to him.

JOE
Dad! I've told you a billion times
to wait in the car outside until I
come out.

STEVE
Why? Do I *creep people out*?

JOE
Yes, one hundred percent, you creep
people out.

STEVE LAUGHS. NAOMI KING (14) runs up to Joe and Steve.

NAOMI
Dad, you're supposed to just wait-

STEVE
Outside, I know, I know, I know.

Steve looks around, spots one of Naomi's friends, AND MAKES A SCARY FACE. Naomi begins to push Steve towards the door.

EXT. SCHOOL BUILDING - DAY

Steve and the kids get back into the shitty Honda.

SECONDS LATER -- *THE AC/DC BEGINS TO BLARE AGAIN.*

EXT. BANGOR, MAINE - MINUTES LATER

The car cruises through the streets of Bangor.

INT. STEVE'S SHITBOX CAR - SAME TIME

Steve looks to Naomi, who rides shotgun.

STEVE
Hey Naomi, take the wheel a second.
I think I dropped a quarter.

Apprehensive, Naomi takes the wheel.

Steve bends down into the well between the seat and the door. Out of sight from his children, he uncaps a little vile, taps a BUMP OF COKE onto his wrist, AND SNORTS IT.

STILL SNORTING he sits back up.

STEVE (CONT'D)
WOOO found it!

Joe and Naomi share a wary look.

EXT. KING HOME - LATER

The car cruises through a gate and screeches to a stop in front of the large King house.

INT. KING HOME / KITCHEN - LATER

CLOSE ON the face of a screaming child, OWEN KING (4). Owen sits in a booster seat in the kitchen. Steve looks into Owen's eyes trying to comfort him.

STEVE

It's okay, Owen, daddy's here.
Papa's here.

OWEN'S PERSPECTIVE -- Steve's face, looming in front of him, is horrifying.

OWEN CRIES LOUDER.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Make way for the airplane, open up
for the airplane!

Steve AIRPLANES Owen's binky into his mouth. Owen finally stops crying.

TABITHA KING (35) stands over the stove preparing dinner.

TABITHA KING

You're really gonna do it?

STEVE

Sure, but I'm not sure which book I want to adapt. The best ones, or, the most popular ones, have already gotten the movie treatment, and *shittily*. Maybe I could make *Thinner* and put out the book and the movie at the same time.

TABBY

Yeah, about *Thinner*-

STEVE

Or I could do *The Shining* again, give it a proper go. You know, considering what a heap of shit that movie was.

TABBY

People liked *The Shining*, Kubrick is--

TABBY

--a genius.

STEVE

An idiot who made a terrible movie, I know, that's what I've been saying for years.

TABBY (CONT'D)
That's not what I was gonna say. I
liked the movie.

Steve goes to Tabby. Kisses her.

STEVE
I know. Thank you for never lying
to me. But I didn't.

Steve turns and grabs a beer from the fridge. He cracks it
open.

Tabby looks at the beer and opens her mouth to say
something... But seems to hesitate.

STEVE (CONT'D)
What's up?

TABBY
It's just... Are you really sure
you want to do this?

STEVE
Yeah, I mean... What do you mean?

TABBY
How long have we been married?

STEVE
Naomi's twelve so...

STEVE (CONT'D)
Thirteen years.

TABBY
She's fourteen, we've been
married fourteen years.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Right, yeah.

TABBY
I mean... Don't act like I haven't
been around. In fourteen years,
I've never once heard you mention a
desire to direct a movie so--

STEVE
Yeah yeah yeah, but--

Tabby grabs him by the shoulders.

TABBY
Steve. Listen to me for two
minutes. Why do you feel like this
is something you have to do?

Steve actually does look at her, however far afield his mind may be, and when he talks it feels like an honest answer.

STEVE

Look around you and tell me what you see.

Tabby humors him, looks around.

TABBY

I don't know, I guess--

STEVE

That's right, Tabby, you see our house.

STEVE (CONT'D)

And you know where we weren't, not that long ago? In this house. You remember where we were?

TABBY

Yes, I remember where we--

STEVE

A trailer. We lived in a trailer and now we don't, because that's what we do, we move up. And directing a movie, a big Hollywood movie? That's another chance to move up, why wouldn't I take it? I don't think I'm tooting my own horn to say that I'm a great writer. Why can't I be a great director, too?

Tabby looks at him for a long, careful moment.

TABBY

I just don't want things to get out of control again. Because I meant it during the intervention five years ago when I said that it had better not happen again. So... you sure you're up to it?

Steve looks down at the beer in his hand, then looks at Tabby and smiles.

STEVE

Everything's under control.

TABBY

(forcing a smile)

If you say so, honey. Help me set the table?

INT. KING HOME / DINING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

The King family sits around the dinner table. Steve picks at his meatloaf, lost in thought, while Naomi *blathers on* about something in the background.

NAOMI

I just... I just don't know what to do, Mom. It's hard. The dance is two weeks away and at this point I don't know if anybody's even gonna ask me. And I don't know if it's because they think I'm ugly, or short, but--

Steve's head shoots up.

STEVE

What did you say? Did you say 'short'?

STEVE JUMPS TO HIS FEET, bumping the table and sending food dishes scattering.

NAOMI

What?

STEVE

That's it! Short! Sweetie, you're a genius!

Steve runs out of the room, jostling Naomi's hair as he passes her. Naomi turns and shouts after him.

NAOMI

No, I'm sad!

She buries her face in her hands. Tabby puts a comforting hand on her shoulder.

INT. KING HOME / STEVE'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Steve's head is buried in a closet. He digs through boxes, searching for something.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

What are you looking for, Steve?

Steve stands, MASSIVE CARDBOARD BOX in his hands. He plops it on his desk and looks up to see...

JACK TORRANCE (30s), classic *Shining* anti-hero and another King hallucination, standing before him.

It's the Nicholson version of Jack. Or, you know, a guy who looks pretty similar to a young Nicholson.

STEVE

Short stories, Jack! Maybe the answer isn't a book, maybe it's a short story, a kernel of an idea that could launch a full film. And every time I get a story published in a magazine I keep one copy for myself and they all go in the closet. Look.

With one hand he grabs a copy of the short story collection *Night Shift* from the box. With the other hand, a number of sci-fi fantasy magazines.

JACK TORRANCE

Wow, and you only got one giant box of short stories in there?

Steve isn't listening. He's turned away, digging in the closet for--

ANOTHER HUGE BOX. He plops this on the desk next to the first.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)

Gee wiz there, that's a lot of writing. Don't forget what I always say, "All work and no play makes--"

STEVE

No, you only say that in the fucking movie. If you're gonna quote me at least be accurate.

JACK TORRANCE

Yeah, on second thought, fuck taking it easy. Like I ever listened to my wife, am I right? I mean sure, Tabby thinks you're going a little hard, but what does she know? If you stop who knows what'll happen, for all you know you'll slide back down, end up living back in a trailer with no family, everyone you love dead and forgotten like dear old mom... Say, what do you say we do a little coke and brainstorm about this script?

As Jack talks, Steve produces a vile of coke and taps out a line to rival the one from earlier.

STEVE
Way ahead of you.

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- The line of coke. Steve's nose. A dollar bill.

SSSSNNNNNNNOOOOOORRRRRRRRRRTTTT.

-- A cap *spins off* a bottle of whiskey. The whiskey is poured into a huge pint glass. Like, really huge. Steve's hand swipes it off the desk.

-- Steve *SPINS AROUND* in his spinning office chair.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. KING HOME / STEVE'S OFFICE - LATER

Steve flips through a fantasy magazine.

STEVE
I've got it! "The Raft!" With the kids on the raft! They die, one by one, then-

ACROSS FROM STEVE sits a plump, Kathy Bates looking lady. It's ANNIE WILKES, from *Misery*, here in the flesh. Well, in hallucination.

ANNIE
Well gosh darn, Steve, are you losin' your gourd? George Romero just phoned last week, he's using that as a segment in *Creepshow 2*.

STEVE
Right. Shit. Hold on, who are you?

ANNIE
You know who I cockadoodie am.

STEVE
The crazy broad who's gonna cut off the writer fella's foot?

ANNIE
Or smash 'em with a sledgehammer -- haven't decided yet.

STEVE
Pretty sure you're gonna cut one off. But I haven't even written you yet.

ANNIE
No but I'm still in here.

She taps her head. Steve picks up another story collection.

STEVE
The Mist! That's it!

ANNIE
Doesn't have an ending.

STEVE
What if I just fuckin' kill them
all?

ANNIE
Even the kid?

STEVE
No, yeah, that won't fucking work.

Steve tosses back another gulp of his whisky pint glass. Then grabs a record from his record collection and slides it into his record player. The needle drops.

INT. KING HOME / HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Tabby walks past the door to Steve's office, Baby Owen sleeping in her arms.

AC/DC MUSIC BEGINS TO BLARE, SHAKING THE OFFICE DOOR.

Baby Owen wakes up and BEGINS TO CRY. Tabby glares at the office door, then continues on, *shushing* Baby Owen.

INT. KING HOME / STEVE'S OFFICE - LATER

Cigarette in one hand, Steve flips through another magazine. Suddenly, HE JUMPS TO HIS FEET.

STEVE
GOT IT, FUCK YES, AYUH, YES SIR!

He tosses the magazine onto the desk.

INSERT -- The magazine is open to the first page of a story titled "TRUCKS."

PAN UP FROM THE COVER TO REVEAL--

INT. KING HOME / LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tabby looks down at the cover of the magazine.

TABBY

Trucks?

STEVE

TRUCKS! This is my movie! It's about *trucks* that *come to life* and *try to kill people*!

TABBY

Okay, I think I remember this story. Why do they come to life?

STEVE

Because of, I don't know, shit, what if there's like an asteroid that passes over Earth.

TABBY

Why would that make them come to--

STEVE

Alien technology, I think, although I'm not really sure yet. All I know is that I'm kind of wedded to this asteroid idea.

TABBY

And how's the script coming along?

STEVE

Right! The script!

Steve turns and runs out of the room.

BEGIN MONTAGE

INT. KING HOME / STEVE'S OFFICE - LATER

Steve POUNDS AWAY at his typewriter like a mad motherfucker. *DING!* He pulls a page free and slams it onto the desk. *DING!* He pulls another page free and slams it onto a small pile of pages. *DING!* Another page. Onto the pile.

LATER

FLAME licks out of a lighter. Steve lights a joint, slumps against the wall of his office and INHALES until the whole joint crumbles to ash.

HE WAITS -- then exhales an insane, inhuman stream of continuous weed smoke.

SECONDS LATER

Steve, as high as any person has ever been, lies slumped on the carpet of his office.

He looks up. The typewriter sits on the edge of the desk above him. Steve crawls across the carpet, reaches up, hooks two fingers onto the frame of the typewriter, and PULLS.

The typewriter topples off the desk, spins end over end and SLAMS into the ground, right side up, inches from Steve's head. A little further over, it would have smashed his brain into the carpet.

The "m" key pops off the typewriter. Unfazed, Steve picks up the key, looks at it, and tosses it away (That's a reference to something. If you don't know to what, you're not cool enough to know).

Steve reaches out with one hand and begins to FINGER PECK on the typewriter.

STEVE

And then... the one mother fucker
says... to the other mother
fucker... Dixie Boy... Trapped at a
gas station... *Mighty Ducks*...
Something asshole...

HOURS LATER

Steve is asleep on the floor in the exact same position we last saw him.

HE JOLTS AWAKE, looks around wildly-- then goes back to his desk.

Steve shotguns a beer, types like a madman, pops a few Xanax tablets, continues to type like a madman.

The stack of pages grows larger.

IN THE BACKGROUND -- *Bowling For Soup's '1985'* plays loudly. Steve SINGS ALONG to the song.

STEVE (CONT'D)

(singing)

*Her two kids in high school--
They tell her that she's uncool--
'Cause she's still preoccupied--
With 19, 19, 1985!*

JACK TORRANCE (O.S.)
How the fuck are you singing along
to this song?

Steve looks up. Jack Torrance sits across from him.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)
This song isn't gonna be written
for another 20 years.

STEVE
Who are you to talk, you're not
real either.

JACK TORRANCE
Harsh but fair, amigo. Here, have
another beer.

He hands Steve another beer. Steve SHOTGUNS it, then
continues to SING and TYPE MADLY.

END MONTAGE

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Steve RUNS through the door of Dan's office. Dan sits at his
desk. Across from Dan, SOME DUDE who's probably a client.

STEVE
DAN!

DAN
Steve, I'm with a client.

SOME DUDE
Fuck me, is that Stephen King? I
can come back.

DAN
No, it's okay--

STEVE
Sure, come back. Send a book, I'll
sign it. See ya later, buddy.

The dude exits. Steve produces the script for *Maximum
Overdrive* and SLAMS IT ONTO DAN'S DESK.

STEVE (CONT'D)
There it is!

DAN
There... There what is?

STEVE

The script! The script, for the movie I'm directing! I'm gonna call it *Maximum Overdrive*!

DAN

This is it? It's done?! I told you this was a *possibility* three days ago and you finished the script? How long even is this thing?

STEVE

250 pages. But I'm making cuts.

DAN

Steve...

STEVE

What, what is it?

DAN

I don't know. How do you feel? Do you feel like you maybe need to step back and take a breath? Think about how you can really be your best self when making this film, instead of rushing head long into something you're not prepared for?

STEVE

Actually, there is something I've been thinking about.

DAN

What is it? I'm sure it's a problem we can work through. Challenges are how we--

STEVE

AC/DC.

DAN

What?

STEVE

They're my favorite band.

DAN

...Yeah, I know, I read your books.

STEVE

I don't want to do this movie unless they write an original soundtrack for it.

DAN
Seriously?

STEVE
Sure, yeah, why not?

DAN
That might not be possible.

STEVE
Get me in a room with Angus Young
and let's find out.

DAN
That might not be as easy as-

STEVE
I'm pretty sure he'll take a
meeting with me, I wrote *Pet*
Semetary.

Steve gets to his feet and walks to the door.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Get me a meeting with Angus Young.
And get me back in a room with Dino
de Laurentiis, I should probably
confirm that this is really
happening! Oh, and read the script,
I think you'll like it!

Steve exits. Slams the door.

Dan picks up the script and begins to flip through it with
what can only be described as moderate disinterest.

INT. KING HOME / LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Steve strolls through the living room, heading towards the
front door. Naomi looks up from the couch.

NAOMI
Hey dad. Where are you off to?

STEVE
I'm, uh, I know this is a little
crazy but I'm about to go meet with
AC/DC.

NAOMI
They're in Bangor?

STEVE

They're actually playing a show in Portland, I'm driving down there for the day.

NAOMI

Oh. Does mom know?

STEVE

No, good point, can you tell her?

NAOMI

Um...

Steve EXITS, slamming the door.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Sure, dad.

INT. DINER - DAY

Stephen King sits across from AC/DC's ANGUS YOUNG and BRIAN JOHNSON in a diner booth.

ANGUS

So you want us to-

STEVE

Write an original soundtrack for the movie, back to front, yes.

ANGUS

And the movie is about--

STEVE

Right, trucks-- no, well, not just trucks but all machines, because a comet passes over Earth and causes all the machines to--

BRIAN

Sure, come to life.

STEVE

Exactly.

ANGUS

Well shit, I guess I'm the fuck on board. I love your writing, and Brian is a huge fan of *Carrie*, so.

BRIAN

That's true.

STEVE

Great.

ANGUS

Great.

BRIAN

Great. Say, I think I'm gonna go to the bathroom and--

STEVE

Wait, for what reason? To take a piss, or to "powder your nose?"

BRIAN

If by powder my nose you mean snort a shitload of coke, then yeah, I'm gonna go snort a shitload of coke.

STEVE

Great.

BRIAN

Great.

STEVE

I'll come with you.

INT. DINER / BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Steve snorts a line of coke off the counter.

Brian snorts a line of coke off the counter.

BRIAN

No, wait, stay still.

Brian taps a bump onto King's wrist, then snorts it off.

STEVE

Alright, hold on, look up at the ceiling.

Brian does. Steve does a bump of coke off his forehead.

BRIAN

Okay, now get your dick out.

STEVE

What?

EXT. DINER / PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

Steve exits the diner, waves goodbye to Angus and Brian, and gets into his car.

INT. STEVE'S SHITBOX CAR - CONTINUOUS

Steve shuts the door and sits in the driver's seat.

A DROP OF BLOOD splashes down onto Steve's leg. He looks in the rearview mirror. A trickle of blood runs from his nose.

Unconcerned, Steve opens his glove compartment. We see that it's full of Kleenex. *This has happened before.* Steve grabs one and starts to staunch the nosebleed.

EXT. DINER / PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Steve's car pulls out of the parking lot.

INT. BAR / LATER

Steve and DINO DO LAURENTIIS sit across from one another in some bar.

Dino speaks with what can only be described as A CRAZY HEAVY ITALIAN ACCENT. He stirs a Bloody Mary as he talks.

DINO

I will be honest. I am not one hundred percent sure you have... how do I say this? Script directing capabilities.

STEVE

Dino, to be honest, neither am I. But I've been able to pick everything else up along the way, right?

DINO

This is what I think as well. And to be honest, what does it matter? You make good movie, you make bad movie, this is not huge risk, I wish for you to make movie you want to make, and I think it will make money on your good name alone.

STEVE

Even if it's a heap of shit?

DINO
Hey, we made money on *Firestarter*,
didn't we?

STEVE
I guess we did.

DINO
Good! Now we need to start thinking
about a script.

Steve pulls out a copy of the script and drops it onto the
table in front of Dino.

STEVE
Here it is, hot off the presses.

DINO
You work fast, my friend!

STEVE
Shit yeah.

Dino picks up the script and flips through it.

DINO
Trucks? It's trucks trying to kill
people?

STEVE
Well, all machines really, because
a comet passes over the Earth--

DINO
Great.

STEVE
And the tail of the comet brings
all the machines to life and makes
them evil, so they try to kill a
group of people who take shelter at
a truck stop--

DINO
Cool.

STEVE
It's based on a short story--

DINO
I love it. Who you want to star?

STEVE
I was thinking Redford....

Dino CHOKES on his Bloody Mary. Some of it comes out his nose.

DINO

You were thinking Redford? You were thinking Robert Redford for our little movie where trucks kill people?

STEVE

What, is that not a realistic plan?

DINO

I can call him, but I suspect he will tell us to, eh, to fuck you, plus, this man, he will consume half our budget on day one.

STEVE

Well shit, Dino. What are you thinking, then?

DINO

I tell you. I have a strong working relationship with Emilio Estevez.

STEVE

Emilio Estevez?

DINO

The kid! The sexy kid! From *Outsiders*, from *Repo Men*. Martin Sheen's son, so practically already in the King family. I tell you, the kid has chops. And besides, the ladies love him. We'll make back our money just from the pussies that flood the theater.

STEVE

Is that really true? He'll draw a female crowd?

DINO

With arms like that kid has, he's probably fucking his way through half of Manhattan right now.

EXT. MANHATTAN - DAY

Cliche establishing shots of Manhattan set to some song about New York.

INT. EMILIO ESTEVEZ'S APARTMENT - SAME

Two people having sex on a couch -- a young EMILIO ESTEVEZ (20s) and an equally young DEMI MOORE (20s). At this point in Hollywood's illustrious history, the two of them are dating.

WITH EVERY THRUST--

EMILIO

Oh, Demi! Oh, Demi Moore! You're so famous and we're fucking! We're both so fucking famous! If we taped this we could sell it for forty million dollars! Huhhh! HUUUHHH!

DEMI

Shut up, Emilio.

Emilio's phone RINGS. A consummate professional, he stops mid-thrust and answers.

EMILIO

Yeah. What? Wait, *what* the fuck is the movie about? No, wait, what is it really about?

(beat)

Are you serious? But it's-- you said King's involved? Wow, no shit? Directing? How much is the offer for? Yeah, yeah, thanks Bernie. Yeah, send over the script.

Emilio hangs up and looks down at Demi.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

They want me to read for the lead in a Stephen King movie. Do you think I should do it?

DEMI

Can we talk about this later please?

EMILIO

Yeah, right, sorry.

They get back down to business.

INT. KING HOME / KITCHEN - DAY

The family, minus Steve, eats breakfast. Steve sticks his head into the room.

STEVE

Everyone be on your best behavior,
I'm flying potential cast in to
read for me today.

TABBY

Is that... Is that the normal
procedure, for something like this,
honey?

STEVE

When has normal ever helped
anybody?

INT. KING HOME / BATHROOM - DAY

Steve looks into the mirror. THE MAN IN BLACK stands over his
shoulder. He nods at Steve -- a faint smile on his lips.

Steve looks down at his palm.

SEVERAL MUSHROOMS, and not the kind you cook for dinner, sit
in his palm. Enough to fuck up more than a few people. Steve
thinks -- then pops them all into his mouth.

INT. CASTING ROOM - HOWEVER LONG IT TAKES SHROOMS TO KICK IN
LATER

We find ourselves in a room with garish bright red walls.

*The interior of this casting room should be as nightmare-ish
as the interior of the store from 'Needful Things.' This is,
after all, Steve's shroom trip.*

Steve and Emilio sit across from one another on vintage bar
stools.

EMILIO

Listen man, I just want to say, I'm
a huge fan. This is a little
embarrassing but *Christine* was
actually one of the first books I
ever really read, it's--

STEVE

Answer me one question.

EMILIO

Um... Sure.

STEVE

You're not Robert Redford.

EMILIO
That's... accurate.

Steve gets up and paces around the small red room.

STEVE
Yeah, well, I wanted Redford to be
in my movie.

EMILIO
I'm sorry I'm not him?

STEVE
Don't beat yourself up too bad --
your dad was in one of my movies,
did you know that?

EMILIO
I did.

STEVE
And you know Dino.

EMILIO
Yeah, a little.

STEVE
Okay, well, I don't know, do you
want to do it? You can act, right?

EMILIO
Do you want me to read sides or
something?

STEVE
Huh?

EMILIO
To make sure I'm... right for the
part?

STEVE
Oh. I don't know, do you want to do
improv or something?

EMILIO
Sure?

Steve raises his arms and runs across the room towards
Emilio.

STEVE
WOOOOO WOOOO I'M A TRUCK I'M GONNA
KILL YOU!

EMILIO
(halfhearted)
Ahh!

STEVE
Great. You'll do. We shoot in North
Carolina in the summer. That work
for you?

EMILIO
I'll have to talk to my agents--

STEVE
Cool, see you then.

Steve holds out his hand. Emilio shakes it.

STEVE (CONT'D)
We're gonna make history together.

INT. CASTING ROOM - LATER

Steve stares directly *INTO CAMERA* -- an image we should be
used to by now. Pupils still dilated. He's still tripping.

REVERSE -- To see the person Steve is staring at. The young,
kind-faced YEARDLEY SMITH. Pre-*Simpsons*.

YEARDLEY
May I just say, Mr. King, I really
love you. On one of my first dates
ever we went to see *Carrie*, it's
just delightful.

STEVE
Have you prepared your sides?

Yeardley looks down at a piece of paper.

YEARDLEY
There's only one line on this piece
of paper.

STEVE
So read it. And by fuck, read it
well.

Yeardley CLEARS HER THROAT and looks down at the sheet.

YEARDLEY
(flat)
Don't make me a widow on my wedding
day, Curtis.

STEVE

Louder.

YEARDLEY

Don't make me a widow on my wedding day, Curtis!

STEVE

WITH PASSION!

YEARDLEY

DON'T MAKE ME A WIDOW ON MY WEDDING DAY, CURTIS!

STEVE

You're hired.

EXT. KING HOME / DRIVEWAY - DAY

Standing next to her car in the King driveway is LAURA HARRINGTON (28) -- movie star cute, big 1980s hair, emanates confidence, intelligence and sexiness. Laura talks into a GIANT, BOXY 1980s CELL PHONE.

LAURA

(into phone)

Yes, Mark, I'm here. But I'm not happy about it. You know I finally got a change to read the script on the flight over? Jesus--

(listens)

I know! I know it's King! But I've said it a million times, I wanna be a fucking movie star, not a drive-in queen! I want fame, damn it! Starring roles, tabloid scandals, all of it! What good is it gonna do me to be in a shitty car movie--

She glances up casually-- and see EMILIO walking towards his car.

LAURA (CONT'D)

(whispers into phone)

Holy shit, is Emilio Estevez auditioning for this movie?

(listens)

He's practically a lock?! Well hell, let me paint you a picture-- photos of me and him, kissing on set. You think *that* scandal would finally get my name out there?

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)
I mean shit-- what if I could break
them up and *steal him* from Demi
fuckin' Moore?

ACROSS THE DRIVEWAY -- Emilio reaches his car.

LAURA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Hey! Emilio? Emilio Estevez?

Emilio glances up to see Laura walking towards him. She
shines a great big pearly white smile his way.

EMILIO
The one and only.

LAURA
Hi. I'm Laura.

EMILIO
Pleasure to meet you.

LAURA
Man, I've-- not to freak out here,
but I'm a huge fan, dude, *The*
Outsiders-- wait, are you-- are you
gonna be in this movie?

EMILIO
Startin' to sound that way. You?

LAURA
Guess I'm about to find out.

EMILIO
Best of luck then, Laura. Hope to
see you on set.

He flashes a smile. She BLUSHES-- whether it's real or an
act, it's a bit hard to tell. Emilio gets in his car. Drives
off. She watches him go.

LAURA
Oh. You're gonna see me on set.

INT. CASTING ROOM - LATER

Pupils still dilated as fuck, Steve stares at the door of the
casting room.

The door opens. LAURA comes sauntering in. Possessed with
sultry determination, Laura walks across the room and sits in
the chair. She looks at Steve for a full three seductive
seconds before talking.

LAURA

I'm a fan of your work. *Cujo*, and all that. Spooky shit.

STEVE

Thank you. You're here to read for--

LAURA

Brett. Weird name for a character. A boy's name.

STEVE

My apologies.

Laura scans her sheet of sides.

LAURA

You're having me read from the sex scene. Of course.

STEVE

Sorry about that. Make the most of it?

LAURA

Why of course.

Laura looks down. When she looks back up she's donned a sultry, sexy guise. She stands. Unbuttons her shirt a few buttons. And saunters up to Steve. Her cleavage and general aura all up in his grill.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're looking quite a bit cuter, I must admit. I'll tell you one thing, hero.

STEVE

(reading dialogue)

What's that?

LAURA

You make love like Dangerous Dan McGrew.

STEVE

(reading action)

She throws herself into his arms and hugs him hard. Kisses him. And he picks her up and carries her back to the cot for Round Two.

They lower their sides. Laura fixes him with a sultry gaze.

LAURA
What'd you think?

STEVE
You're hired.

LAURA
Great. See you in North Carolina.

EXT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Laura exits the casting room and rebuttons her shirt, the sultry guise she was putting on IMMEDIATELY dropping away. She walks off down the hall.

INT. KING HOME / JOE'S ROOM - DAY

Joe sits hunched over the desk in his room, scribbling something onto a sheet of paper. Tabby knocks on the door.

TABBY
Sweetie, come out to the driveway,
we're gonna say goodbye to your
father.

JOE
Coming!

Joe continues scribbling as Tabby leaves.

EXT. KING HOME / DRIVEWAY - MINUTES LATER

Steve loads a suitcase into the trunk of his car and slams the trunk. He turns towards Tabby and Naomi.

TABBY
We're gonna miss you around the
house.

STEVE
You're gonna come visit the set at
some point, right?

TABBY
Sure, once the kids are out of
school in a couple weeks I'll load
them onto an airplane, we'll come
see what you're working on. What is
it, thirty days of filming?

STEVE
Thirty-one, I think.

TABBY
And you're gonna... You know...
Take it easy?

Steve brushes past this comment.

STEVE
I'll be fine, Tabby. Like always.

Joe runs out of the house and jogs up to them, small stack of paper in his hand.

JOE
Hey dad!

STEVE
What is it, buddy?

JOE
I, uh... I wrote something. I was
wondering if you'd take a look at
it.

Steve takes the pages and looks at them.

INSERT: The first page. "Black Cloud, by Joe Hill."

STEVE
What, like a story?

JOE
Yeah, something like that.

STEVE
You sure I'm not too uncool to read
it?

JOE
I mean, you're pretty uncool,
but... I'd appreciate it.

STEVE
Yeah, sure, buddy. I'm gonna be
pretty busy over the next few
months but I'll try to take a look.

Steve crams the story into his pocket. Joe looks uncertain.

NAOMI
So, dad? You excited? Your first
movie?

STEVE

You know? I really am. I just... I really think I can do it.

TABBY

Do what?

STEVE

Make the greatest movie of all time.

BEGIN MONTAGE

EXT. AIRPORT / NORTH CAROLINA - DAY

Emilio Estevez gets off an airplane, cool guy sunglasses on his face.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Steve cruises across the country in his charmingly shitty car, cool guy sunglasses on his face.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Laura Harrington cruises down a dirt road on a motorcycle, cool guy sunglasses on her face. She passes a sign that says "WELCOME TO NORTH CAROLINA."

END MONTAGE

EXT. DIXIE BOY - DAY

WIDE ON a full scale set recreation of a truck stop. A sign displays the name "DIXIE BOY TRUCK STOP."

Gas pumps, convenience store, none of it yet finished so workers are scurrying back and forth.

In the parking lot sits a massive toy truck with a giant recreation of the Green Goblin's face mounted to its front. On the side, the words "Happy Toyz."

STEVE AND DINO stand side by side, admiring the facade.

DINO

Steve. This my masterpiece. What you think?

STEVE

It looks straight out of a unicorn's pussy snortin' dream.

DINO

What does this mean?

STEVE

It looks incredible. The truck, especially. Remind me, Deenies, why are you in town?

DINO

Another production of mine is shooting here, this is why we shoot you movie in North Carolina, I tell you this two hundred times.

STEVE

Oh yeah, right. What's the other movie?

DINO

It is called *Blue Velvet*.

STEVE

Interesting title. Not to my taste but it's undeniably evocative.

DINO

I am inclined to agree. But, that Kyle McLaughlin. Biggest dick I have ever seen on a man.

STEVE

Oh, he shows his dick in the movie?

DINO

No, why?

Steve looks quizzically at Dino.

INT. DIXIE BOY / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Steve, Dino and ALL THE CAST MEMBERS OF *MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE* take their seats in a circle of folding chairs set up in the main room of the full-scale Dixie Boy Truck Stop set.

Laura and Emilio sit next to one another.

EMILIO

Hey! Laura, right? Great to see you again!

LAURA
(flirty)
You too.

Steve looks around the room, locking eyes with Emilio, Yeardley, Laura, all the others.

STEVE
Can I just say, so fucking glad to have all of you here. The purpose of this table read--

DINO
Like all table reads, the purpose is to get the script on its feet, give notes on performances...

STEVE
Yeah yeah yeah, but in this case... I wrote the script very fast. I just want to make sure everything makes logical sense. So if anything stands out as illogical, feel free to speak up. Alright. I'll be reading action. Fade in...

INT. DIXIE BOY / MAIN ROOM - LATER

Many pages have been turned. Emilio and an older actor, PAT HINGLE (60s), are the stars of the scene being read.

PAT
You're messin' where you hadn't ought to be messin' again, boy. I guess sometimes even college boys don't learn their lessons until they've had their chops busted a few times, do they?

EMILIO
Do you know whats going on outside, you happy asshole? You blind?

STEVE
Great! I think that scene holds up, right?

EMILIO
Well sure, I'm just wondering what exactly it means to call someone a happy asshole--

STEVE
 (cutting him off)
 It's perfect! Moving on.

INT. DIXIE BOY / MAIN ROOM - LATER

The part of DEKE is read by child actor HOLTER GRAHAM (14).

HOLTER
 Bill... Where's my dad?

PAT
 Done got scrubbed by one of them
 big boys out there. Tough break,
 kid.

STEVE
 (reading action)
 Laura slaps him in the face, hard.

LAURA
 A little lesson in manners from the
 road-twitch, you fucking oinker.

STEVE
 End of scene, great work!

LAURA
 I just don't know exactly what a
 'road twitch' is, but--

STEVE
 Figure it out from context, Laura,
 it's a common expression in Maine.

SERIES OF SHOTS of actors reading lines:

-- Emilio reads a line.

EMILIO
 It's a broom. Say you're a race of
 aliens looking for a new place to
 live... say you're looking for a
 new planet like you or me might
 look for a new house. Only it's
 like a big old house no one ever
 took care of. So they send in their
 interstellar housecleaners... send
 in their broom... and sweep it
 clean.

-- Laura reads a line.

LAURA

I never saw a hero with his ass up
in the air like that.

-- Emilio reads a line.

EMILIO

Don't you go to the movies? Heroes
always do this shit alone.

INT. DIXIE BOY / MAIN ROOM - LATER

Steve turns the last page of his script.

STEVE

The end. Great! That's a wrap. Is
there anything logically that
doesn't make sense?

DINO

I believe some of the lines--

STEVE

No, the lines are great. We're
talking logic. *Logic*. Anyone?

Yeardley raises a nervous hand. Steve nods at her.

YEARDLEY

In the script, all cars come to
life, right? But why don't the cars
we're driving come to life? Like,
we're in a car, driving away from
evil cars... Is our car not evil?
Why wouldn't our car crash itself
into another car to blow us up?

STEVE

Hmm. Interesting. A legitimate
point, Yeardley. Thank you. I'll
fix it before the day.

(closes his eyes)

Committing to memory... Committing
to memory... Got it!

Steve stands and turns to leave.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Anyone else have logic issues?

Four separate hands go up. Steve's back is already to the
table. He doesn't see them.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Cool. We're gonna make ART, people.

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL ROOM - 4 AM

It's 4 AM. Steve lies awake in bed. Staring straight at the ceiling.

He reaches over, grabs his phone, and dials.

Ring. Ring. Ringadingdingding.

TABBY - PHONE
(groggy)
Hello.

STEVE
Tabby. Tabitha.

TABBY - PHONE
Steve... What time is it?

STEVE
Tabby. It's the first day. It's the first day of shooting.

TABBY - PHONE
Well tomorrow is. It's not *day* yet.

STEVE
Tabby.

TABBY - PHONE
You're nervous?

STEVE
No. Never.
(beat)
A little.

TABBY - PHONE
(falling asleep)
Just... remember... you're gonna...
do... great...

Tabby falls asleep on the other end.

Uncertain, Steve sets down the phone, then looks up to see--

ANNIE WILKES, appeared from nowhere, standing at the foot of the bed. She holds a sledgehammer in her hand. Steve JUMPS.

ANNIE WILKES

Sure, that wife of yours says
you're gonna do great, but what the
cockadoodie heck does that dirty
bird know? I'm your number one fan,
Stevie, and I'm worried you just
won't have the energy.

THE MAN IN BLACK (O.S.)

She's not wrong.

Steve JUMPS again, looks over to see--

THE MAN IN BLACK, leaning coolly against the wall.

ANNIE WILKES

Who the heck are you?

THE MAN IN BLACK

I go by many names. Randall Flagg,
Walter o'Dim--

STEVE

The Man in Black.

THE MAN IN BLACK

I may not be of this world, but I
have seen and seen again the
consequences of failure. Remember
where you came from. Remember how
easily you could return there.

He points across the room. Steve looks over to see--

A GRIMY TRAILER impossibly nestled against one wall of the
hotel room.

The color drains out of Steve's face as he looks at it.

STEVE

I'm never going back there.

JACK TORRANCE (O.S.)

You sure about that?

Steve jolts. JACK TORRANCE stands next to the bed.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)

Because he's not wrong. You had
better do whatever you can to
ensure you're at your peak
performing capacity -- hadn't you?

Steve thinks about this. Then--

TITLE OVER BLACK -- DAY 1

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL / BATHROOM - 5 AM

Coke. All the coke. All the coke goes into Steve's nose.

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL - 6 AM

Steve jogs back in forth, chugging a beer.

EXT. BANK - 7 AM

A full production day -- on a fairly low budget movie. But, you know, we've still got crew guys and cameramen and boom mics and all that good stuff. Everyone setting up.

Eyes dilated, Steve strolls to the middle of the set dressed in A LUDICROUS WHITE SUIT. A can of beer clutched in his hand.

STEVE

Hello! Hello crew! Attention!

People stop what they're doing, look up reverently. We hear MURMURS OF--

VARIOUS CREW MEMBERS

Look! / It's really him. / That's Stephen fucking King.

STEVE

I just want to say that I think we're gonna make something really special here. And what better way to start than with the most special of all -- my cameo. Let's all do our best work today! And... break!

The crew goes back to work.

ARMANDO (O.S.)

Inspiring speech.

Steve turns to see ARMANDO NANNUZZI (61), an intimidating, gaunt, deadly serious Italian man with a THICK ACCENT.

ARMANDO (CONT'D)

Not every day do I see a director extol his own brilliance to crew, then say "break." Armando Nannuzzi. Director of Photography.

STEVE

Steve King, put her there, friend.

Steve holds out his hand to shake. Armando just stares at it and does a little half smile to himself.

ARMANDO

You know we've met before?

STEVE

We have?

ARMANDO

Yes, on *Silver Bullet*. I was DP on that picture, too. We interact many times. But this, you forget.

STEVE

Well, friend, I apologize, it's been a hectic couple of years, but I've got a good feeling you and I are gonna get along real well now.

ARMANDO

Yes. Maybe we will.

Armando surveys the set.

ARMANDO (CONT'D)

Steve, may I ask, what happens in this scene?

STEVE

Today? Big scene. First scene of the movie. The Earth has just passed into the tail of the comet--

ARMANDO

No, specifically, what happens in this scene.

STEVE

I walk up to an ATM machine. And it calls me an asshole.

Armando stares at Steve for a long moment.

ARMANDO

Art is a difficult thing to create. Sometimes the creation of smut is an art in itself.

(beat)

You might want to get your costume on.

Armando walks off. Steve looks after him quizzically. Then puts on a bowler hat, and dorky glasses with clip on sunglass lenses that flip up.

Steve walks over to the ATM. THE PROP MASTER tinkers with the display screen.

STEVE
Show me what we're working with.

Prop Master hits a couple buttons. The display comes on.

INSERT: The screen reads "YOU ARE AN ASSHOLE."

STEVE (CONT'D)
Great. Next one?

Prop Master hits another button.

INSERT: The screen reads "ASSHOLE ASSHOLE ASSHOLE ASSHOLE..." and on and on and on.

Dino approaches.

STEVE (CONT'D)
We ready to go?

DINO
Ready.

STEVE
Great! Thanks again for being here
for the first day.

DINO
I'll show up for you when I can, my
friend.

Steve looks around and rubs his hands together.

STEVE
Let's get this in one take.

EXT. BANK - MINUTES LATER

ARMANDO stands next to a cameraman who shoots a wide shot.

FROM ARMANDO'S POV -- We see Steve walk across the parking lot and stand in front of the ATM (a recreation of the opening scene from *Maximum Overdrive*).

STEVE
Honey!

Steve flips up the sunglass lenses on his glasses and looks to an EXTRA standing over his shoulder.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Come over here, sugar buns! I think
this machine just called me an
asshole.

Steve walks away from the ATM.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Cut!

Steve jogs over to Armando, removing his hat and sunglasses.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Hey, need some quick movie tips,
who's the person I ask whether we
got everything or not?

ARMANDO
Excuse me?

STEVE
Like, all the shots, how do I know
if we got all the shots.

ARMANDO
You should know, you're the
director. You check as you move,
you keep track of everything, are
the eye lines matching, are the
actors acting, have you captured
the art, the beauty, the heart of
the--

STEVE
Well I think we got it, we shot the
thing and the other thing and the
cameras were...

ARMANDO
Rolling?

STEVE
Moving, yeah.

ARMANDO
Yeah, sounds like you got it.

STEVE
Great. Pack it up everyone. Great
first morning.

Steve walks away from Armando. A BEER CAN falls out of Steve's pocket and clatters onto the ground. Armando looks at it with visible distaste. He looks to CAMERAMAN #1.

ARMANDO

A man who lives his life this way
has only misery in his future.

Cameraman #1 looks to Armando.

CAMERAMAN #1

What?

EXT. LUXURY'S LAP MOTEL - NIGHT

A flickering sign reads "Luxury's Lap Motel -- The Lap of Luxury."

EXT. LUXURY'S LAP MOTEL / EMILIO'S ROOM - NIGHT

Emilio walks to a motel room door and KNOCKS.

After a few seconds -- the door opens, revealing Laura. She wears a tank top, no bra and chews gum. She smiles, leans against the door frame.

LAURA

What's up, Mighty Ducks? Wondering
when you were gonna swing by.

EMILIO

That movie's actually not gonna
come out for like another six
years.

LAURA

So I can see the future. Suck my
dick.

EMILIO

I'll pass, thanks.

LAURA

Suit yourself. Come on in.

INT. LUXURY'S LAP MOTEL / LAURA'S ROOM

Laura reclines on her bed. Emilio stands at the foot.

LAURA

So what's on your mind?

EMILIO

I don't know. Do you think... Do you think this was a mistake? I mean. It's Stephen King. *Stephen King*. Nobody loves the man more than me. But does Stephen King seem a little bit--

LAURA

Coked out of his fucking mind? I don't know. Maybe? But who cares?

EMILIO

Who cares? If Steve doesn't slow down, he's gonna have an aneurism and die in the middle of our shooting schedule!

LAURA

Yeah, well. If anything, it's worked to my advantage so far.

EMILIO

What do you mean? Did you... You didn't fuck him, did you?

LAURA

What? No. He's a married man. I mean I might have... flirted a little.

EMILIO

Well that's gross.

LAURA

Why? It's a studio movie, it's Stephen King, we're young and hot, and you know what happens to young hot people in Hollywood. They become not young. And not hot. So excuse me if I use what's at my disposal to keep riding this wave. You know what I mean?

Laura plays with the string of her tank top.

EMILIO

It sounds like you mean you think I'm hot.

LAURA

Oh, come on. Fuckin' *Repo Man*? Don't act like you don't know.

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

I mean we're gonna be neighbors for the next month, so... you think you might wanna... have some fun?

She extends her foot out and rests it on his thigh. He looks down. Waits probably a beat too long before backing away.

EMILIO

I... No, I'm dating Demi Moore.

LAURA

Oh, come on, I'm cuter than she is, aren't I?

EMILIO

That's-- irrelevant. No.

LAURA

I mean we could make a pretty powerful couple. Stars of the movie, falling in love? It'd be a cool story, right?

EMILIO

I-- I should really get going. Goodnight, Laura.

LAURA

You sure? Because there's a little mini-bar over there, you sure you don't wanna, I don't know, pour champagne on my boobs or something?

Emilio exits, shutting the door behind him. Laura watches as he walks past the window, heading back towards his room.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Damn it.

TITLE OVER BLACK -- DAY 2

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MORNING

EXTREMELY CLOSE on two hyper-dilated pupils. PULL BACK to reveal--

Steve WHISTLES as he walks across a baseball field.

Bright and early. TWENTY KIDS in baseball uniforms. And the actor playing their COACH. Off to the side of the baseball field, a utilities shack with a vending machine.

Steve, Coach and STUNT COORDINATOR gather in front of the vending machine.

STEVE

(to Coach)

You understand what's gonna happen in this scene, right?

COACH

Yeah, a can flies out this machine and hits me in the dick, right?

STEVE

Right. And it's a big ha ha, all the kids think it's real funny. Until another can hits you in the forehead and then BAM you die, the kids freak out.

COACH

That's all great -- listen, is this gonna hurt my dick? When the can flies out, is it gonna hurt my dick?

Stunt Coordinator holds up a cardboard can.

STUNT COORDINATOR

Shouldn't. See. It's thin cardboard. But considering the velocity it might still be wise to wear a protective--

STEVE

Ah, I'm sure he'll be fine, look at him, big strong man, let's get this thing on its feet.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MINUTES LATER

Coach stands tentatively in front of the vending machine.

STEVE

And... ACTION!

OFF TO THE SIDE OF THE MACHINE, Stunt Coordinator activates a pressurized pump. A cardboard can SHOOTs out of the vending machine and slams into Coach's cock area. Coach doubles over.

STEVE (CONT'D)

CUT!

COACH
That hurt, man! That still fucking
hurt my dick!

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - LATER

Steve and CREW MEMBERS stand over a *dummy body* modeled after an eight-year-old boy.

STEVE
This thing is chalk full of corn
syrup, right? Like, full to the
brim?

Prop Master nods.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Great. Let's do this.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MINUTES LATER

Everyone in their places.

STEVE
ACTION!

An industrial street cleaner ROARS TO LIFE and rolls towards the dummy of the boy.

The street cleaner graphically crushes the dummy boy's body. Red corn syrup SPRAYS VIOLENTLY from the dummy.

Steve and the crew ROAR WITH LAUGHTER. Armando watches proceedings with typical distaste.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The crew sets up on a closed-off stretch of highway. Off to one side, Steve chats with Armando, planning out shots. As they talk, A CAR sits still on the empty stretch of road.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Yeardley Smith and JOHN SHORT, the actor playing her husband, sit in the car, waiting for filming to begin.

YEARDLEY

I don't get it. During the table read, he said he would fix the issue of the cars we're driving not coming to life. But far as I can tell, he didn't! There's no reason this car we're in doesn't crash itself into a wall to kill us.

JOHN

I think he's got other things on his mind.

YEARDLEY

Like what?

JOHN

Coke? Listen, Yeardley. We're at the start of long exciting careers, let's just enjoy it.

YEARDLEY

Fair enough. There is one thing I'm pretty excited about. In a few weeks I'm starting voice work on these cartoon shorts called "The Simpsons."

JOHN

What's that about?

YEARDLEY

A family of yellow people having adventures.

JOHN

Really? Well hell, my motto is, take the work you can get-- you never know what's gonna take off.

YEARDLEY

You know Laura actually has a fun line of dialogue in this movie -- "Eat my shorts." I like the sound of that. Eat my shorts. Maybe I can take it, use it in something.

STEVE (O.S.)

Action!

John starts the car. It rolls out of frame.

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Steve dials a number and holds the phone to his ear. The phone rings... rings... rings... Then--

TABBY (MESSAGE)

You've reached the King residence,
please leave a message--

Steve hangs up.

JACK TORRANCE (O.S.)

Why do you think she didn't answer?

Steve looks up to see Jack standing at the foot of the bed.

STEVE

Probably just busy.

JACK TORRANCE

Sure there's not a chance she's
getting a little tired of you?
Falling out of love? Because it
happens more than you'd think, I
should know.

STEVE

What-- What are you talking about?

JACK TORRANCE

Oh, I'm sure it's not worth
worrying about. What say we take a
ride and forget our troubles?

Jack hands Steve a tab of acid. Steve puts it on his tongue.

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Steve lies on his bed flipping through TV channels.

STEVE

Oh, shit. *Twilight Zone*.

INSERT: The TV screen. Rod Serling addresses the camera.

ROD SERLING

You are entering... *The Twilight
Zone*. You, Stephen King, are
entering *The Twilight Zone*. Check
this shit out.

The TV cuts to static -- then reappears on an image of JACK TORRANCE.

JACK TORRANCE
Steve! Hey, Steve! I'm in your TV!

STEVE
The fuck are you doing in there?

JACK TORRANCE
That's a good question. Matter of fact, it is a little lonely in here. I'm coming back out.

Jack grips the sides of the TV and begins to CLIMB THROUGH into the real world.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)
Check it out, I'm climbing out of your TV, Steve, just like that girl in *The Ring*!

STEVE
What in God's name is *The Ring*?

JACK TORRANCE
Don't know, doesn't exist yet. Point is, here's Johnny.

STEVE
I didn't write that line, that line was in the shitty movie! If you're gonna quote Kubrick to me you can go back in that fucking TV!

Jack emerges fully into the room and walks up to Steve's bed.

JACK TORRANCE
Alright, alright, I'll lay off. Point is-- how's your trip?

STEVE
Not great, I'm still seeing you.

JACK TORRANCE
Say, that's true, maybe you should take it up a level.

Jack produces a bottle of Jack Daniels.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)
Hey, this is kind of funny. I'm Jack Torrance and this is Jack Daniels. Drink us both in, you son of a bitch.

Steve takes the bottle, then looks around the room.

STEVE

This is a fantasy. So is this...
fantasy booze?

JACK TORRANCE

Tell you what, Steve, why don't you
drink it and find out.

Steve unscrews the cap and begins to drink.

SERIES OF NIGHTMARISH IMAGES -- As the acid kicks in, as the
effects intermingle with the scotch.

This is the very definition of a bad trip.

-- The room shifts and tilts around Steve. ANNIE WILKES and
THE MAN IN BLACK dance in front of the melting wallpaper.

-- The trailer that Steve used to call home is back against
the far wall of the room, a hellish glow around it.

-- STEVE'S P.O.V. -- JACK TORRANCE leers into Steve's face,
his creepy grin twisted out of proportion.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)

*...dead like dear old mom and no
one to love you, why do you think
your old man left, why...*

-- Blood pours from Steve's nose. He clutches his hands to
his face trying to hold it in. *Is any of this real?*

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Sun shines in through the window. Steve is sprawled on his
bed, fully clothed and fully unconscious. His bedside phone
RINGS INCESSANTLY. Finally, Steve's eyes peek open. He emits
a LONG GROAN.

Uh-oh. Hangover city.

Steve reaches over and smacks the phone. It falls off its
cradle. He feebly drags it towards his face.

STEVE

Heelllllooooo?

DINO - PHONE

Steve! Where in God's name are you?

STEVE
Hell's asshole.

DINO - PHONE
I didn't catch that, but if the answer was anything besides "on set, filming the fucking ice cream truck scene, and I've been there for an hour but you just didn't see me because you're an idiot, Dino, you're an idiot," then so help me--

Steve's eyes shoot wide open.

STEVE
Fuck!
(into phone)
Coming!

Steve hangs up and shoots upright in bed. Annie stands at the foot of the bed.

ANNIE WILKES
Now look at that, you've gone and disappointed him, him and everyone else. How could you let something like that happen. How--

MOMENTS LATER -- Steve rails a line of coke off the bedside table.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATE MORNING

The whole crew has assembled on a closed-off stretch of highway that stretches in front of the Dixie Boy.

An ice cream truck is parked on the highway. The back of the truck is open. A length of telephone poll has been shunted in, spanning from front to back.

Steve stands with Dino, Armando, Stunt Coordinator and a young STUNT DRIVER.

STEVE
Okay, so, explain this to me.

STUNT COORDINATOR
The stunt is, the ice cream truck careens into frame, crashes, and flips end over end.

STEVE
Won't it just roll sideways?

STUNT COORDINATOR

No, that's why we have the phone poll, and the cannonless turnover system inside the truck, so the pneumatic lever will extend and the truck will go up--

STUNT DRIVER

And crash down on its ass, front over end. All the while I'll be inside in an enforced cage at a controlled skid.

ARMANDO

Sliding past a carefully placed cameraman, far enough back to capture it safely and with thrill.

STEVE

Right, right...

DINO

Steve. It's a complicated stunt, but it's all set up. I know you've had a... rough morning. All you have to do is call action. You barely even have to direct.

This hits Steve HARD and WRONG.

STEVE

I barely even have to direct? I'm the fucking director-- shouldn't I direct?

ARMANDO

Stephen--

Steve SHUSHES Armando.

STEVE

Stunt driver guy.

STUNT DRIVER

My name's Dan.

STEVE

How fast you driving?

STUNT DRIVER

Around forty. It'll look faster on--

STEVE

Fuck that. Can you go fifty?

ARMANDO

You do not know what you are doing,
that sends everything out of the
realm of controllability--

STEVE

(to Stunt Driver)

Kid. Can you do it or not?

STUNT DRIVER

(grins)

For you? Shit yeah, Mr. King.

STEVE

Great. Let's go.

ARMANDO

This is insane! And dangerous! And
not just for him, either, what if
he slides into a cameraman? I won't
stand by and let you put my crew at
risk like this.

STEVE

Well shit, somebody's gotta shoot
it.

ARMANDO

Fine. Fine! If none of you see how
crazy this man is, I will take the
risk. I will run the camera.

STEVE

Whatever you need to feel
comfortable, *buddy*.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MINUTES LATER

Armando, in position, personally mans the camera.

Steve and Dino stand back with the rest of the crew at a safe
distance.

IN THE TRUCK, Stunt Driver grins and revs his gas.

STEVE

ACTION!

Stunt Driver SLAMS ON THE GAS.

The truck takes off.

The odometer creeps up to 50.

IN THE TRUCK -- The pneumatic tube system fires. A metal lever shoots out, slamming the ground.

The truck's wheels leave the ground. IT FLIPS--

SIDEWAYS, not end over end as it was supposed to. SPARKS FLY as it slams down onto its side and skids sideways across the ground--

SCREECHING straight towards Armando. Armando's eyes go wide. He grabs his camera, LEAPS--

And lands with a THUD on the ground as the ice cream truck SCREECHES past him, tearing through the place where he stood just moments before.

He would have been dead.

The truck comes to a stop.

A moment of stunned silence. Armando cowers on the ground, his arms over his head. Slowly, he looks up. Realizes he's alive. Then--

STUNT DRIVER

I think I'm okay! Did we get it?!

The crew breaks their trance and RUNS towards the accident. Crew members pull Stunt Driver from the car. He appears uninjured.

Armando gets to his feet -- physically unharmed but shaken.

The realization sinks in that nobody is harmed. Slowly, the mood shifts back towards conviviality. Lots of nervous joking and laughing.

But not from Armando.

STEVE

Well, that clearly went a little off the rails, but I think it'll be fine when all's said and done, assuming the film survived.

STUNT COORDINATOR

Man, exciting morning!

More hand shaking and laughing from the crew. The mood grating on Armando more and more until--

ARMANDO

(loud as shit)

THAT'S ENOUGH!

Everyone shuts up. Armando strides towards Steve.

STEVE

Calm down there, partner.

ARMANDO

You nearly killed me! YOU NEARLY!
KILLED ME! AND YOUR STUNT DRIVER!
And you would have killed my
cameraman had I not had the
foresight to replace him! Because
you are drunk, and high!

STEVE

You don't know that! Maybe my
pupils just dilate in the sunlight!

ARMANDO

You are a foolish lug of a man!

Armando turns to address the whole crew.

ARMANDO (CONT'D)

How do none of you see what is
happening?! We got lucky today!
Tomorrow, maybe not! If we continue
like this, somebody gets hurt!

Stunt Driver approaches Steve and Armando.

STUNT DRIVER

Honestly, Armando, I feel fine.

STEVE

That's the spirit! Come on, chill
out, Armando, we're all friends
here. RIGHT?

Laughter and approval from the crew.

Armando gives Steve a death stare -- then walks off. Steve
turns cheerily back to the crew.

INT. DIXIE BOY / MAIN ROOM - DAY

Emilio sits at the counter and talks on the phone. He watches
through the window as the crew preps a shot

EMILIO

It's going pretty well. Tensions
are a little high, but I'm getting
along with the cast just great.

Demi's voice comes through from the other end of the phone.

DEMI - PHONE

And how, uh, how's the love
interest? Those sex scenes aren't
bleeding over to real life, I hope.

EMILIO

(hesitating)

Well--

Emilio glances out the window-- sees STEVE beckoning to him.

DEMI - PHONE

Well?! Well what? Did something
happen between you two?

EMILIO

(flustered)

What? No, I-- I don't even think
she's hot. Dem, I gotta run, they
need me on set.

DEMI - PHONE

I didn't ask if you thought she was
hot. Why would you bring that up?

OUTSIDE, Steve walks towards the window. He presses his face
to the glass and peers through at Emilio.

STEVE

Emilio! We need you out here, pal!

DEMI - PHONE

(worried)

Hey, I was thinking maybe I might
come out and visit you next week.

EMILIO

I'd love to see you but there's
really nothing to worry about--

DEMI - PHONE

Maybe I'll... Remind you why we're
so good for each other.

EMILIO

Fine, that'd be great. I really
gotta run, Dem. Bye!

*The song "HIGHWAY TO HELL" by AC/DC kicks in, and carries us
through this montage--*

BEGIN MONTAGE

TITLES OVER BLACK -- DAYS 12 - 18

Each shot in this montage is formatted the exact same way -- something is being filmed in the background, while in the foreground Steve is drinking a beer.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

1) BACKGROUND: Emilio Estevez and Laura Harrington film a love scene. FOREGROUND: Steve drinks a beer.

2) BACKGROUND: A drawbridge lifts, in an iconic (at least as iconic as a movie this nutty can have) scene from the movie where a drawbridge lifts up while cars are all still on it. FOREGROUND: Steve drinks a beer.

3) BACKGROUND: Emilio runs from a truck. FOREGROUND: Steve drinks a beer.

5) BACKGROUND: Steve drinks a beer. FOREGROUND: Steve drinks a beer.

6) A screen divided into nine squares, *Brady Bunch* style. In all the outside squares, Steve drinks beers. In the center square, he looks to camera, crosses his arms and smiles.

END MONTAGE

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK - DAY

The King family, Steve, Tabby, Joe, Naomi, and baby Owen in a stroller, walk through a sparsely populated North Carolina amusement park.

NAOMI

Mom, can we take Owen to see the duck pond?

TABBY

Sure, just...

Naomi and Joe grab Baby Owen and run off.

TABBY (CONT'D)

...don't drop him.

She looks at Steve and smiles. They kiss.

STEVE

So how was the flight in?

STEVE (CONT'D)

As far as a flight with a baby can go, pretty good. He only cried seven times, so I consider that a victory.

She takes Steve's hand.

TABBY

How's the production going?

STEVE

Pretty well. I think.

TABBY

Yeah?

STEVE

Yeah. The stuff we've got looks great. Leading kids are gonna sizzle on screen. It's what we don't have yet that scares me. Some of the stunts... When I'm writing, it's me in a room. But there are people now. People depending on me to tell them, oh, you know, where to go, what to do. And fuck if I know all the time. But I think if I just stay the course... it'll be something really special.

TABBY

I'm sure it already is.

She smiles at him.

STEVE

You know, this bladder of mine is a real bastard, I'm just gonna run to the little boys' room for a second.

Steve lets go of Tabby and heads towards a Port-a-Potty. Tabby watches him go. She's not stupid.

TABBY

Steve.

STEVE

Yeah?

TABBY

Are you sure you have to... Go to the bathroom?

(MORE)

TABBY (CONT'D)

Sure you don't just want to enjoy a day at the fair with your family?

STEVE

(hesitates)

Well gee, Tabby, it's just... I really gotta let the hog loose, or else I'll be squirming the rest of the day, you wouldn't want that, would you?

TABBY

No. I suppose I wouldn't.

STEVE

I... I'll be back in a second.

INT. PORT-A-POTTY - NINE SECONDS LATER

Steve RAILS a line of coke. He leans back, waiting for it to hit him--

Then suddenly GRIMACES in pain. He clutches both hands to the side of his head, struck by a violent migraine.

He doubles over, and stays like that for a few moments before straightening up.

EXT. ROLLER COASTER - MINUTES LATER

Steve sits in the front seat of a roller coaster, hands still on his head. Joe and Naomi sit in the back. They wait for it to take off. Joe leans forwards.

JOE

Hey dad, did you get a chance to read my story?

FROM STEVE'S P.O.V. -- The sun in blinding, blistering, boring in on him.

STEVE

What?

The roller coaster *takes off*.

MOMENTS LATER

The roller coaster whirls through the air and SPINS upside down. Steve looks wildly from side to side to side to side, clutching the sides of the ride in mortal terror.

Joe sits in the back, dejected, sullen faced.

ON THE GROUND

Tabby holds Owen. And watches. Sad disapproval on her face.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

The King family walks through the airport -- the kids up ahead, Steve and Tabby trailing behind.

STEVE

Jesus, they're growing up quickly.
I know that's a cliché, and as a
writer I should be able to come up
with something better, but...
Christ, it's true.

TABBY

We're all getting older. How's your
head?

Steve stops and looks at her.

TABBY (CONT'D)

I'm not stupid.

STEVE

I know you're not--

TABBY

And I was worried to let you come
out here, but you promised you'd
keep things under control.

STEVE

I know, and I--

She kisses him. It lasts a beat longer than it should. Then
she takes his face in her hands and really looks into his
eyes -- a warning in the look.

TABBY

Just promise me you'll try. I don't
want to have to keep having this
conversation.

STEVE

Okay. I'll try.

Tabby walks after the kids towards their gate.

WALKING THE OTHER DIRECTION is Demi Moore, looking as gorgeous as the day young Ashton Kutcher jerked off to her while watching *Striptease*.

Demi approaches EMILIO, also at the airport, who holds a sign reading "Demi! <3 <3 <3".

Demi sees him and smiles, he smiles back, he throws his sign aside, runs towards her, she leaps at him, he wraps his arms around her, she wraps her legs around his waist, he kisses her, she kisses him back, they begin making out passionately right there in the middle of the airport, he takes her shirt off, her tits bounce in the cold airport air, her nipples are hard, he takes them in his hands, then in his mouth, she climbs off of his and pushes him backwards onto the luggage carousel, now he's lying down, she pulls off his pants and then pulls off his underwear and his hard movie star cock sticks up in the air and she jerks it off, then sticks it in her mouth and goes up and down on it, then she strips off her pants and her panties and fingers herself for a minute while blowing him, then climbs onto him and takes his cock in her hand and puts it into her pussy and then rides him, then spins around and rides him backwards, so hot neither of them can take it, they're both about to explode, and all the while the TSA watches and they eventually start jerking off, one by one they just take out their cocks and masturbate...

TITLE OVER BLACK - DAY 9

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL ROOM / BATHROOM - MORNING

Steve looks groggily into the mirror. Jack stands over his shoulder, holding out a little baggie of coke.

JACK TORRANCE

Looking pretty groggy there. Sure you don't want, I don't know, a little pick me up?

STEVE

Not today. I told Tabby I'd try and Goddammit, I intend to do that.

EXT. DIXIE BOY / PARKING LOT - MORNING

Emilio and Demi walk through the Dixie Boy parking lot, arms around one another.

DEMI

So, what scene do I get to watch you shoot? Something heroic?

On her words, something dawns on Emilio and his face falls.

EMILIO

Oh no.

INT. DIXIE BOY / BACK ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Emilio and Laura lie naked in a bed in the back room of the truck stop. About to shoot a love scene.

Demi stands behind the cameras, visibly enraged. With her are Armando and STEVE -- who is presently sober and looking a little worse for wear for it.

AS THE CREW PREPS, Laura leans in towards Emilio, who is clearly uncomfortable, and whispers--

LAURA

I know it's awkward that your girlfriend is watching, but we should just be focused on making this as hot as possible. You know. For the good of the movie.

EMILIO

Well fuck... I'm a professional. I'll give it my A-game, Laura.

LAURA

You know what I saw in a French film once that was *really* hot?

Laura whispers something into Emilio's ear. Emilio blanches.

EMILIO

I don't know--

LAURA

Come on, don't you want our movie to be authentic? To feel real?

EMILIO

I mean I guess so.

Laura looks up at Demi. Makes eye contact. Winks at her.

STEVE

Action!

Emilio and Laura begin to kiss furiously. After a minute, they separate.

LAURA

I'll tell you one thing.

EMILIO

What's that?

LAURA

You sure make love like a hero.

She laughs and caresses his chest. They continue kissing, cuddling together. They turn and look out the window.

EMILIO

Wow. Look at that light.

LAURA

I think it's the comet. You know we've been in its tail for almost twelve hours. And if it is that comet that's making everything go crazy then all we gotta do is stay alive for the next seven days.

EMILIO

No problem.

They resume making out. Emilio begins kissing her forehead. He hesitates-- and then literally LICKS THE SWEAT OFF OF IT (a real thing that happens in *Maximum Overdrive*).

Demi leans in to Steve.

DEMI

(furious whisper)

Why did you direct him to do that?

STEVE

...I didn't. Pretty hot though.

Laura glances at Demi again, then begins to MOAN FURIOUSLY. Demi fumes. Laura and Emilio roll apart.

STEVE (CONT'D)

CUT! Great work everybody.

Laura and Emilio roll apart. Laura touches Emilio's arm.

LAURA

That was fun. Wasn't it?

EMILIO

I just hope it was convincing--

Emilio sees Demi storming towards the door.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

Oh, shit.

Emilio leaps out of bed and runs after Demi.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

I'm sorry! It's just acting! You know what it's like!

DEMI

Save it.

Demi exits. Laura comes up behind Emilio and puts a hand on his lower back.

LAURA

What's she so mad about?

Emilio ignores her, runs out of the room.

EXT. DIXIE BOY PARKING LOT - MAGIC HOUR

The sun sets in the background. Actress ELLEN MCELDUFF, dressed in a waitress outfit, delivers a full-blown emotional monologue to the trucks in the parking lot.

ELLEN

(shaking her fist)

YOU CAN'T! WE MADE YOU, Y'HEAR? WE
MADE YOU! YOU CAN'T! WHERE'S YOUR
SENSE OF LOYALTY, YOU PUKEY THINGS?
YOU SONS OF BITCHES! YOU DIRTY SONS
OF BITCHES! WE MADE YOU! DON'T YOU
UNDERSTAND? YOU CAN'T DO THIS, WE
MADE YOU!

MULTIPLE SQUIBS GO OFF AT ONCE as Ellen's front explodes with bloody spray. She falls to the ground.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

We... made you.

STEVE

Cut! Great work, Ellen.

Ellen gets to her feet and looks at her bloody costume.

ELLEN

Well geez, Steve, you got me
looking like that Carrie girl.

Steve turns to address the crew. When he speaks, it's with a little less confidence than his normal coked-up self.

STEVE

Everyone, quick reminder! Tonight,
the Dixie Boy is not just a set! As
a celebration of how well the shoot
has been going, we are turning the
Dixie Boy into a party! I hope to
see you all there.

EXT. DIXIE BOY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Later that night. The Dixie Boy's parking lot is abandoned.

INT. DIXIE BOY - SAME

On a ladder, Steve hangs a disco ball from the ceiling. It turns on and begins to spin, casting its rad disco light all over the interior of the Dixie Boy, abandoned save for tables of food and drink.

Steve looks around. Without music, without people, without drugs in his system, the dancing lights can't mask the hollow emptiness of the desolate set.

The front door of the truck stop CREAKS OPEN. Armando enters. Upon seeing Steve, he pauses awkwardly.

ARMANDO

Oh... Hey Steve.

STEVE

Armando! Hey! Come on in!

ARMANDO

Am I... early?

STEVE

No, no. Well, sorta. I said 8. In American parlance, that means roundabout 8:28. But, if you don't mind helping me set up...

ARMANDO

You don't have P.A.'s to do the setting up?

STEVE

Oh, I do, but I wanted to give the little guys a break. Here, mix some punch. Should be one part punch, four parts vodka.

He gestures to a table, where the ingredients lie. Armando nods and begins mixing the punch.

ARMANDO

You want a cup?

Steve clearly does, but...

STEVE

No. That's alright, I'm actually trying to cut back.

ARMANDO

Listen... Steve... We've had some... tough moments.

STEVE

Yes, Armando, yes we have.

Steve hops down from the ladder and walks up to Armando.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You think I'm a piece of shit.

ARMANDO

No. I don't know. Maybe I do. Maybe I just think you're... reckless. At times.

STEVE

Isn't that the fun of life, being reckless at times?

ARMANDO

Not if you put others' lives in danger.

STEVE

We're both sensible men. You can't be a writer and not believe in change. I'm trying to change. So I believe we can still be friends. Can we just try to have fun together tonight?

ARMANDO

Yes, Steve. We can try.

INT. DIXIE BOY - MINUTES LATER

The Dixie Boy has been transformed into a thriving party. The disco ball casts its light on dancing partiers. Steve stands alone against the wall.

STEVE'S P.O.V. -- A party filtered through the lens of somebody with extreme social anxiety. Too much movement, too many people, all of it too overwhelming. If he was high, on the other hand...

Emilio and Demi walk up to Steve, who has begun to sweat.

EMILIO

Steve! I just want to thank you again for the role. This is my girlfriend, Demi.

STEVE

I-- uh-huh, yeah, nice to meet you.

He extends a shaky hand. Demi takes it awkwardly.

EMILIO

Alright, well... Take care, man.

Emilio claps him on the shoulder and walks off.

INT. DIXIE BOY / BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Steve washes his face. He looks up at the mirror, AND SEES--

A WOMAN IN A BAGGY BLACK DRESS standing over his shoulder. This is MARGARET WHITE (50s) -- the mother of inafamously terrible prom date CARRIE. Steve JUMPS, startled.

MARGARET WHITE

I told you you'd be boring off drugs. Lots of people out at that party and they're not gonna like you, not a single one, they're all gonna laugh at you, like when you were an ugly little boy with no friends and they called you Freaky Stevie, FREAKY STEVIE, FREAK--

Steve turns away from the mirror and leans against the wall. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small handful of assorted uppers. The pills rattle in his shaking hand.

He raises them towards his mouth.

INT. DIXIE BOY - MINUTES LATER

In the middle of the room, Steve *shucks and jives* with the shamelessness that only a middle aged white guy can have. Dino wanders up to Steve.

DINO

Steve!

STEVE

Dino! Glad you could make it!

DINO
You really know how to throw a party.

STEVE
That's why they called me the Cool--
Mr-- Mr. Cool-- Mr. Cool Normal Guy
in high school!

DINO
Sure, just don't let this thing go
too late, alright? You've gotta
make your day tomorrow!

STEVE
I thought tomorrow was simple!

DINO
Relatively, but even so--

STEVE
I'll be fine, Dino!

EXCITED WHOOPS ring out around them.

Steve and Dino look up to see Angus Young, Brian Johnson and the rest of AC/DC walking through the door.

DINO
Is that--

STEVE
AC motherfuckin' DC, baby. Angus!
Hey, Angus!

The band walks over.

ANGUS
Steve, what's up?!

DINO
Did you boys fly here from
Australilia?

ANGUS
I never miss a chance for pussy. Is
there any pussy here?

BRIAN
Where do you want us to set up?

STEVE
In the corner, just smash that
sound system out of the way.

BRIAN

On it.

Brian runs across the room and PUNCHES the sound system. Sparks fly. The music stops. People groan.

AC/DC quickly set up in the corner. Brian takes the mic.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

We'll start with a little something
we whipped up for the movie. This
one's for you, Steve.

CHEERS all around. The band launches into a performance of *Who Made Who* -- the hit single which was indeed written exclusively for *Maximum Overdrive*.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

*The video game says play me,
Face it, on a level, but it takes you,
every time on a one on one!*

Steve looks at Armando and GRINS.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

*Who made who, who made you? Who
made you, ain't nobody told you?*

Dino and Yeardly dance together in the crowd.

BEFORE LONG -- AC/DC is wrapping up the song.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

*Who made who, who made who,
Yeah, nobody told you!*

Brian Johnson steps away from the microphone.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Steve! Swap in for a song?

Steve rubs his hands together.

STEVE

Dreams do come true, Stevey boy!

Steve runs up to the microphone. All eyes in the room on him. Steve turns to the band.

STEVE (CONT'D)

"Highway to Hell," hit it!

The band begins to play. Steve sings terribly, but with tremendous gusto.

STEVE (CONT'D)

*Livin' easy,
Lovin' free!
Season ticket on a one way ride!
Askin' nothin'
Leave me be!
Takin' something something side!*

In the crowd, Armando laughs. Animosity forgotten.

This party is alive!

INT. DIXIE BOY BACK ROOM - SAME TIME

Demi and Emilio lay on the floor making out. She pulls away. He sighs, frustrated.

DEMI

I just- I can't stop thinking about you and Laura on that bed together.

EMILIO

We were shooting a scene together, Dem! You know what that's like.

DEMI

You licked sweat off her forehead!

EMILIO

She told me it would be hot, said she saw it in a French film! Oh, shit, do you think she was lying?

DEMI

She winked at me when you were sex acting! Has anything happened? Between you two? If it has... I need to know.

EMILIO

No. I promise. I mean maybe she's flirted a little, but--

DEMI

She what?! I fucking knew it!

The door opens and Laura walks in.

LAURA

Oh. Sorry. Am I fucking up a moment?

DEMI

You mean the same way you *fucked* my boyfriend?

LAURA

Wow, hold on, I didn't fuck Emilio.
I asked, but he said no.

EMILIO

That's true, she's telling the truth!

LAURA

Not sure why though. Not sure what
he sees in you.

DEMI

Oh, you fucking--

EMILIO

Hold on! What is this Laura? You're
trying to, what, break us up?

LAURA

I just... think you're cute?

EMILIO

Really? Or do you think I'm famous?

Laura has no answer. Emilio wraps his arm around Demi.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

She's my girlfriend. You're not.
Come on, Demi.

Emilio and Demi go back into the main room. Laura looks after
them, pissed.

INT. DIXIE BOY - SAME TIME

People drinking, dancing in the main floor of the Dixie Boy.
HOLTER, the child actor, sneaks a cup of spiked punch when
nobody's looking.

STEVE

*And I'm goin' down...
All the way...
I'm on the highway to hell!*

The song wraps to *BOISTEROUS CHEERS*.

ANGUS

You got another one in you?

STEVE

Only if we can make it a duet!
Armando! Armando!

Steve beckons Armando to the stage. Armando looks around.

ARMANDO

Who, me?

STEVE

You and me, friend! A new era!

Armando comes up to the band.

ARMANDO

I only know "Back in Black."

STEVE

"Back in Black" it is. Hit it!

The band begins to play.

ARMANDO

(timid)

*Back in black. I hit the sack.
It's been too long I'm glad to be
back.*

Steve takes over, with verve.

STEVE

*YES, I'M LET LOOSE!
FROM THE NOOSE!
THAT'S KEPT ME HANGING ABOUT!*

Steve and Armando sway, arms around one another. Soon they're at the end of the song.

STEVE

*Yes, I'm back!
Well, I'm back, back!
Well, I'm back in black!
Yes, I'm back in black!*

ARMANDO

*Whoop, I'm back!
True, I'm back, back!
Bro, I'm back in black!
Yeah, I'm back in black!*

The crowd erupts into cheers!

Steve grabs Angus's guitar and begins to play for all he's worth, loving every moment.

Every.

Fucking.

Moment.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. STEVE'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Steve's eyes open. He's hungover as fuck. We've been here before.

EXT. STEVE'S HOTEL - LATER

Steve walks through the hotel parking lot, sunglasses on, beer in hand -- hair of the dog.

He stops next to a trash can, leans over, and retches into it. He then looks up and looks around. Gray skies. Wind. A palpable sense of dread in the air.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Steve walks up to the crew. They've set up the production in the driveway of a house located in a suburban neighborhood.

They've clearly been waiting for him a few minutes too long. But the goodwill from the party remains.

STEVE

Hey, gang!

VARIOUS

Hey Steve! / Fun party, man. /
Rough night?

Dino walks up to Steve and takes him aside.

DINO

Steve. You know what's happening in this scene?

STEVE

Yeah yeah yeah. A lawnmower chases Deke, tries to kill him, he bikes away from it, right?

DINO

Essentially. And you feel... up to directing?

STEVE

Excuse me?

DINO

I just know it was a big night, are you sure--

STEVE

Yeah, I feel up to directing.
Matter of fact, I'm feeling like
this scene lacks bite. Get my stunt
coordinator over here. And Armando.

Dino calls them over.

STUNT COORDINATOR

What's up?

ARMANDO

What is the issue, friend?

STEVE (CONT'D)

I don't think this scene is
working. I don't think it feels
dangerous enough.

ARMANDO

What do you propose?

STEVE

I wanna put real blades in the
lawnmower.

STUNT COORDINATOR

Okay, man, but you know that nobody
is actually gonna see the blades.

STEVE

How do you mean?

ARMANDO

He means we only ever see the top
of the lawnmower.

STEVE

I don't care. This is an authentic
production, it all has to be real.
All of it. Or audiences won't care.

ARMANDO

This is illogical, it only adds
danger--

STEVE

Hey. Armando. I thought we were
buddies now.

Armando hesitates -- then smiles.

ARMANDO

Yes. Of course.

DINO

I'll tell props to get on it.

STEVE

And faster, too. However fast it was going before-- I want it doubled.

ARMANDO

Didn't you learn your lesson last time from--

STEVE

Just do it. Please.

DINO

(hesitant)

Sure, Steve.

LATER -- Everyone is in their places. Prop Master stands with the lawnmower.

STEVE

Remember! Twice as fast!

Prop Master turns up the dial on the LAWNMOWER, and adjusts the rig that will hold down the acceleration to make it look as though the thing is moving on its own.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Action!

Prop Master STARTS the lawnmower. It takes off on its own.

The lawnmower rumbles quickly across the shooting space marked out on the driveway.

Then. Without warning.

IT VEERS OFF COURSE. And rumbles straight towards the crew.

Everything happens quickly.

The crew members dive out of the way. The lawnmower strikes a wooden beam that's being used as a camera support.

The real lawnmower blades TEAR INTO THE WOOD.

IN SLOW MOTION--

A single chip of wood is spat out. It flies through open air, soaring across the driveway.

Moving straight towards the unprotected face of Armando Nanuzzi.

His eyes go wide.

*The chip
of wood
pierces
through
Armando's
left
eyeball.*

END SLOW MOTION

Armando SCREAMS and falls to the ground, clutching his face.
Blood and gore seep through his fingers.

Crew members RUSH to Armando's side. Steve stands back, face
gaunt in terror.

INT. HOSPITAL / ARMANDO'S ROOM - LATER

Armando sleeps in a hospital bed, a bandage over one eye.

INT. HOSPITAL / HALLWAY OUTSIDE ARMANDO'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Steve and Dino talk to a DOCTOR.

DOCTOR
Fortunately, it looks like he'll
keep the eye.

DINO
Thank God.

DOCTOR
But it was close. Don't know how
this could have happened on a
professional film set.

The Doctor walks off. Steve breathes a sigh of relief.

STEVE
Well, that's a load off my back.

DINO
A load off your back? A load off
your fucking back?!
(MORE)

DINO (CONT'D)

You nearly blinded a man! I told you, Steve, I told you not to let the party run late and now look at what you've fucking done!

STEVE

It was an honest accident!

DINO

Why the hell did the lawnmower need real blades? Armando knew this would happen, too! Jesus Christ. Jesus. In all my years...

Dino paces down the hallway. He runs a hand through his hair.

STEVE

Dino.

DINO

What?!

STEVE

I'm... I'm sorry.

DINO

Let's just finish this fucking shoot. So I can go home to my wife and never think about this Goddamn cursed movie ever again.

He storms off. Steve looks in at Armando, asleep in his bed.

INT. HOSPITAL / ARMANDO'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Steve tiptoes into the room and approaches the bed. He looks down at the sleeping Armando.

STEVE

Armando. Armando, friend. I don't know if you can hear me, but--

ARMANDO

I can hear you fine, you oversized tub of shit.

Armando's uncovered eye creeps open.

ARMANDO (CONT'D)

You blinded me.

STEVE

The doctor said your eye would be fine.

ARMANDO

You misunderstand. You blinded me... with kindness. And with AC/DC. I forgot you were a moron. This is the price that I pay.

STEVE

Armando...

Steve reaches out and touches Armando's shoulder. Armando stares coldly down at Steve's hand.

ARMANDO

Only a fool rebuilds a bridge more than once. It is too likely to fall again. Or in your case, to blow the fuck up.

STEVE

Armando, pal, I obviously didn't intend for this to happen. Can I make it right? Let me know how.

ARMANDO

The first step is realizing you're the one who is blind. Leave me to my pain.

Steve takes a step back and looks at Armando a moment longer, helpless in his hospital bed. Then he turns and leaves.

TITLE OVER BLACK -- END OF SHOOTING

EXT. DIXIE BOY PARKING LOT - MAGIC HOUR

As the sun sets pink and red, as crew members pack up the set, PEOPLE SAY GOODBYE. Hugs exchanged this way and that.

Emilio makes the rounds, hugs Yeardley, Pat, Holter, the other cast members. LAURA watches him from a distance, still angry.

STEVE, too, watches all the goodbyes from afar, bittersweet.

Steve scans peoples' faces. Makes eye contact with Armando Nannuzzi, gauze over one eye, standing off to the side of the lot. No expression in his stony face.

Steve raises a hand to his forehead and tips him a salute. Armando just stares back... Then turns and walks away.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

Steve's car ZOOMS OFF down the highway. He passes a "Now Leaving North Carolina" sign.

EXT. KING HOME / BANGOR - NIGHT

Steve cruises into the King driveway at a steady sixty miles an hour. He rolls up the driveway at the same speed, nearing the house. Then--

STEVE

Oh fuck!

He SLAMS the brake.

SQUEaLSCReEChCAREEnREEEEEEE

The car SLOWS, SLOWS--

And comes to a stop almost in time. The nose of the car THUNKS into the garage door, creating a sizable dent.

Steve opens the door of the car. Forty beer cans fall out into the driveway.

INT. KING HOME / DINING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Steve enters the dining room.

Tabby, Joe, Naomi and Owen eat dinner around the kitchen table. They look up as he enters.

TABBY

Steve!

Tabby gets up, runs to him, and hugs him.

TABBY (CONT'D)

I didn't know you were getting home today.

STEVE

Oh, shit, I knew I forgot to mention something.

TABBY

Come on, come eat with the family.

INT. KING HOME / DINING ROOM - LATER

The family sits around the table, enjoying a quiet meal. Steve looks across the table to Naomi and smiles.

RACK FOCUS to the wine bottle in the middle of the table.

INT. KING HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve and Tabby sit on the couch watching TV. The wine bottle is clutched between Steve's legs.

Tabby cuddles closer to Steve. Steve kisses her on the cheek and puts an arm around her.

TABBY

Hey Steve?

STEVE

Yeah babe?

TABBY

I think we should take it easy for a while.

STEVE

Like for the rest of the night?

TABBY

No. No, I mean a few weeks. A month. The family, I think we should go on vacation, spend some quality time together.

STEVE

That's not gonna be possible. I have to fly to Los Angeles tomorrow to start post and sit in on editing, and then the release date's gonna be looming--

INDIGNANT, Tabby moves away from Steve.

TABBY

How is all that *possibly* already happening?

STEVE

I ordered a rush on the prints, that's what all the experts say.

(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)

Tabby, you gotta jump on this stuff while it's fresh in the mind or else it'll slip away from you, slip the fuck away from you and you'll never get it back, and that's, I'm not gonna let that happen, plus then the press tour's gonna start--

TABBY

Why do you have to do press, you're not exactly Emilio Estevez!

STEVE

Plus there's that new book I just started writing--

TABBY

WHEN did you start a new book?

STEVE

At dinner. In my head. It's about this writer chick who's always getting her period and then one day she's walking in the woods and she finds a spaceship--

TABBY

I don't give a FUCK what your new book is about.

STEVE

Okay. You're mad.

TABBY

No, Steve. Not at all. Have fun in Los Angeles.

She gets up and storms out. He looks after her sadly.

JACK TORRANCE (O.S.)

Women. Right?

Steve looks over, sees JACK sitting on the couch next to him.

STEVE

She's really upset.

JACK TORRANCE

Eh, she'll get over it. Come on, let's do some blow and write about that chick who's on her period.

As they walk out of the room--

STEVE
I think I'm gonna call it *The Tommyknockers*.

JACK TORRANCE
Sure you are, buddy.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - DAY

Sweepingly cliched establishing shots of Los Angeles.

INT. STUDIO / EDITING BAY - DAY

Steve sits on a couch in an editing bay, watching the final few frames of *Maximum Overdrive*. The movie ends. The EDITOR stops the projection.

EDITOR
Well?

STEVE
I love it. Perfect. No notes.

EDITOR
That was an assembly cut. There was no music and it was three hours long.

STEVE
Oh. In that case. Run it again.

The Editor SIGHS and starts it again.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Shots from around Los Angeles.

IN A SHINY RED CONVERTIBLE -- Steve CRUISES down the PCU. The ocean bright and beautiful beside him.

IN THE EDITING BAY -- Steve watches footage of the kid getting smashed by the street cleaner and LAUGHS maniacally.

IN A MOVIE THEATER -- Steve watches ROCKY IV.

-- ON SCREEN, Apollo Creed dies.

-- IN THE AUDIENCE, Steve wipes away a tear.

ON THE BEACH -- Steve walks along the coast. He breaks into a jog, goes ten feet, and has to stop and catch his breath.

IN A CONCERT HALL -- Steve is onstage singing with -- inexplicably -- the band *Bowling For Soup*.

-- A MASSIVE CROWD cheers for them.

-- Steve is front and center on stage, flanked by band members JARET REDDICK and CHRIS BURNEY. Steve leans into the microphone.

STEVE
(singing for all he's worth)
Springsteen, Madonna,
Way before Nirvana.
There was U2 and Blondie,
And music still on MTV.

PCU -- Steve continues cruising down the PCU.

MUSIC FADES OUT -- MONTAGE ENDS.

INT. STUDIO / EDITING BAY - DAY

AS BEFORE, the final few frames of *Maximum Overdrive* play.

EDITOR
Okay. Now what did you think?

STEVE
Now it's perfect.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - EVENING

ACTUAL FOOTAGE FROM THE ENDING OF MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE (Courtesy of the 'De Laurentiis Entertainment Group'... Hopefully)
FILLS THE SCREEN.

THE IMAGE CUTS TO CREDITS--

And we PULL BACK to reveal the interior of a screening room.

THREE EXECUTIVES, sitting in fancy seats and smoking cigars, turn away from the screen and look at one another.

EXECUTIVE #1 takes a LONG PUFF ON HIS CIGAR and inhales for like twenty seconds. HE EXHALES a long, long stream of smoke.

EXECUTIVE #1
Oh no. Oh, no, no, no.

EXECUTIVE #2
It's not so bad.

EXECUTIVE #3

It's not so good.

EXECUTIVE #2

We've seen worse.

EXECUTIVE #1

Where was I for the worse screening?

EXECUTIVE #3

Jerking off in your office?

EXECUTIVE #1

Fuck off, Billy, that was one time.

EXECUTIVE #2

Gentlemen! We can settle this later. Right now we have a bigger issue. Figuring out how the fuck we sell this.

EXECUTIVE #3

Can we just say "Starring trucks and the guy from 'Breakfast Club'?"

EXECUTIVE #2

No! I've got it. People aren't gonna like this movie. But you know what people do like?

EXECUTIVE #1

...The trucks?

EXECUTIVE #2

Stephen. King. People like Stephen King. How do you think we got here in the first place? They like his books, they see his name in the trailer...

EXECUTIVE #3

So what are you suggesting?

EXECUTIVE #2

We put him in the trailer. Have him pitch the movie. Directly to the audience. Imagine it -- "Maximum Terror! Maximum King!" They like him, they come.

EXECUTIVE #3

He's not an actor. And... He's weird as fuck.

EXECUTIVE #2
Do you have any better ideas?

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

A COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR (20s) stands behind a camera. People mill back and forth in the background and foreground. The camera points directly at a green screen.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR
Ready... Rolling... And... Wait.
Where the fuck is King?

He looks up from the camera. The venerable Stephen King is nowhere to be seen.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE / BATHROOM - SAME

Steve looks into the bathroom mirror. In one hand, he holds a swath of script pages.

STEVE
(reciting)
I thought, why not do it myself?
(then, to himself)
Fuck. Fuck. What's next?

He looks down at the pages in his hands--

Then SLAPS HIMSELF across the face and barrels the mirror.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Get it together! Get it the fuck
together!

Suddenly, THE MAN IN BLACK steps into view in the mirror behind Steve. He doesn't say anything. Just stares at him.

Steve closes his eyes... takes a deep breath... sticks a hand into his pocket... And freezes.

He pulls A SMALL VIAL OF COCAINE out of his pocket. He just looks at it. For a long while. A long, long while.

SECONDS LATER, a line of coke *DISAPPEARS* into King's nose.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - MINUTES LATER

Commercial Director looks through his camera.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR
And... ACTION.

Across the soundstage, STEVE stands in front of a giant image of the Green Goblin truck. Steve walks towards the camera.

SUPER -- THIS IS A REAL COMMERCIAL, FIND IT ON YOUTUBE
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggWS4tTzs60>).

STEVE
Hi. My name is Stephen King. I've written several motion pictures but I want to tell you about a movie called *Maximum Overdrive*, which is the first one I directed.

WE PUSH IN to an extreme close-up on Steve's face.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I finally decided if you want something done right, you outta do it yourself.

BEHIND STEVE, the eyes of the truck begin to GLOW BRIGHT RED.

STEVE (CONT'D)
It was my first picture as a director, and you know something? I sort of enjoyed it!

He flashes a wild, crazy-eyed chipmunk grin and points aggressively into camera.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I'm gonna scare the hell out of you. And that's a promise.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR
Cut!

ASSISTANT COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR runs up to Commercial Director.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
I think we got it.

A.C.D.
We only did one take.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR
We'll splice it up with a bunch of shots of explosions and Mr. Breakfast Club and call it a day.
Good work, Steve!

They look up. Steve has already departed.

CAMERAMAN
Yeah, he left already.

INT. KING HOME / LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The front door of the King home SWINGS OPEN. Steve steps through.

STEVE
Wonderful family! I am home!

TABBY (O.S.)
We're in here.

Steve looks in the direction of her voice -- the living room. Something. Feels. Off.

CAUTIOUSLY, Steve walks towards the living room.

STEVE
Is everything alright?

TABBY
Everything's fine.

INT. KING HOME / LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Steve steps into the room and sees -- HIS GREATEST FEAR.

FIFTEEN PEOPLE sitting in a circle. Amongst them, Tabby. Naomi. Joe. Owen in a high chair. Dino, Dan and Suzy. Other people whom we'll assume to be his relatives, family friends.

This is an intervention. Interventioning is happening.

STEVE
What is this?

TABBY
Don't you remember from five years ago? Or were you too high then, too?

STEVE
An intervention? You're giving *me* an intervention? This is bullshit, I don't have to listen to this.

Steve turns, makes to walk out the door.

TABBY

WAIT!

Steve freezes.

TABBY (CONT'D)

Goddamn it, Steve. You will not walk out that door. I don't care if you quit, I don't even care if you turn around and call me a bitch, I just care that for two seconds you turn around and FUCKING LISTEN TO ME. GIVE ME THE TIME OF DAY. FOR ONCE. Or me and the kids leave.

Steve turns around slowly.

STEVE

Okay. Okay, you want me to listen? I'll listen. What do you wanna say?

Tabby rises from the couch, leans down, picks up a large garbage bag, and turns it upside down.

THE REMNANTS OF ALL THE DRUGS KNOWN TO MAN tumble out. Beer cans. Grams of coke, Xanax, NyQuil, Valium. Empty cough medicine bottles. Two broken bongos. More beer cans.

They pour out endlessly for seconds upon seconds.

And more seconds upon seconds.

AND STILL they keep pouring out onto the ground until the entire floor is covered in a sea of the remnants of his sad, sad self-destruction.

TABBY

You were home for three days in the last month. This was from three. Days. Do you see? Do you see now?

Steve just stares at her. Steely eyed anger. Tabby gives it right back.

TABBY (CONT'D)

This is it. The part where you hear about everyone you've hurt. Let's go.

DINO

You blinded a man. Besmirched my name.

STEVE

The doctor said Armando would probably be fine--

DINO

They said that. But he won't. They only thought that at first but it's gotten worse. Armando has lost all vision in his left eye and he's suing us for 18 million dollars.

TABBY

Who else? Who else has Steve hurt?

She looks around. Naomi raises her hand timidly.

STEVE

You... You have something to say, Naomi? After all the allowances I gave you?

NAOMI

There was a father daughter dance at my school, Dad. You said you would come but you didn't. I stood in that auditorium but you never showed up. And do you know what you were doing when I came home? You were passed out in a bathtub full of beer. You filled a bathtub with beer and *got into it*. And then in the morning when I asked you what you were doing you said "beer city," and laughed at me.

STEVE

Okay, anyone else wanna speak up?

DAN

I relocated my office here for you. And now you're at risk of destroying both our careers.

Joe raises his hand.

STEVE

You too?

JOE

You were supposed to take me to see *Jaws 3D* but you were too fucked up to drive. I had to run to the theater and by the time I got there they were out of 3D glasses.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)
Who the FUCK wants to see a shark
in 2D? It looked terrible!

Joe rises to his feet.

JOE (CONT'D)
And more than that. You didn't read
my short story. I want to be you,
don't you get that? And you didn't
even read my damn story.

STEVE
(genuinely confused)
Joe. What story?

JOE
Exactly.

Joe sits. Tabby rises.

TABBY
You missed our anniversary. For the
first time in fifteen years. You
just forgot.

Steve scans the rest of the faces. He looks at Owen, the tiny
infant, sitting in his high chair. Owen looks straight into
Steve's eyes.

OWEN
(British accent)
You've honestly been quite a
disappointment to me, father.

Steve blinks with disbelief.

STEVE
Okay I might still be a little
high.

Tabby rises to her feet. She and Steve stand face to face.

TABBY
That's the problem! Don't you see
that that's the problem! You're
always high!

STEVE
Yeah, okay, maybe I am. But Christ,
Tabby! What do you want me to do,
stop?

TABBY

Yes! For fuck's sake, yes, of course that's what I want!

STEVE

I! CAN'T!

TABBY

Why not?! Why can't you try, for us?!

Steve hesitates -- looks like he's really considering it. He glances over Tabby's shoulder.

The Man in Black stands coolly against the wall. Arms crossed. Looking at Steve. All other sound in the room fades away.

THE MAN IN BLACK

Don't listen to them. They're all wrong.

And Steve looks back at Tabby, exasperated, like it's the most obvious thing in the world, and when he talks spittle flies out of his mouth.

STEVE

Because I don't stop! I never stop! Don't you get that?! We lived in a trailer ten years ago, a fucking trailer, or did you forget?! My mom died and all I've done is work, I worked to get us a house and to get my book published and to get another book published and another book and another book and I worked to fuck a baby into you and another and another, and I worked to keep us moving up and up and up and we're still moving up, we're still fucking moving up and it's all because I don't stop! If I stop, what happens then?! We go back? Back like the nothing we were before, back in a fucking trailer? THAT'S NOT US, NOT ME, I'M NOT GONNA BE ALONE AGAIN, LIVING IS GOING, AND IF I STOP-- *IF I STOP, I DIE!*

BOOM. A dead silence falls on the room. Tabby just stares at him. And he stares back at her.

His gaze shifts off her, he looks around the room. His eyes land on Joe, on Naomi. On Owen. On Dan, Suzy and Dino. The others. Then back on Tabby.

TABBY

Jesus Christ, Steve. What the fuck are you talking about? If you stop, we're here. If you stop, we're all still here, like we were before. Don't you see that?

Steve takes another look at all his loved ones.

STEVE

I have to go. I have a movie to promote.

TABBY

Steve.

He walks towards the door. As he goes through it--

TABBY (CONT'D)

STEVE.

Steve turns back. A trickle of blood runs from his nose.

TABBY (CONT'D)

Your nose is bleeding.

He wipes away the blood, inadvertently smearing it across his face --- a pathetic sight.

TABBY (CONT'D)

And don't come back.

Steve pauses in the doorway. Then leaves and SLAMS the door.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Steve lays on the bed. Glass of Scotch in his hand. Ah, the loneliness of hotel rooms. Steve flips through TV channels and lands briefly on--

INSERT -- Sissy Spacek getting covered in pig's blood.

A faint, sad smile crosses Steve's face.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - EARLY MORNING

Steve and a cheery MORNING SHOW HOST (50s), all smiles, sit on chairs opposite one another in a small studio.

On-screen morning show graphics tell us this is a Canadian breakfast interview show.

SUPER: This is a real interview. Find it on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdpWlb2B6LM>).

MORNING SHOW HOST

You must have made like twenty five million dollars on these books.

STEVE

It's not that much yet but I guess it could get there, gross huge amounts of money, yeah.

MORNING SHOW HOST

But you don't have any desires to elaborate further than the movies and the written word, do you?

STEVE

No, I don't even think I wanna make another movie, it's a primitive way to create. You know what I'd really like to have?

MORNING SHOW HOST

What?

STEVE

A pair of lizard skin boots.

Steve grins. His tongue flicks out of his mouth and he licks his lips.

EXT. STUDIO - MINUTES LATER

Steve exits the studio, fake smile still plastered on his face. As soon as he steps outside, the smile fades.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

A flashing marquee-- the premiere of *Maximum Overdrive*.

Red carpet in full swing. A limo pulls up. Steve gets out. He walks down the carpet. Cameras FLASH as he enters the theater.

INT. PREMIERE THEATER - LATER

Steve sits next to Demi in the front row of the theater.

ON SCREEN -- The kid getting run over by the street cleaner.

Steve grins. He leans over to Demi, looking to say something...

But she's leaning to the other side, whispering to Emilio. Steve's smile falls. He slumps back in his seat.

A FEW ROWS BACK -- Dino watches the movie unfold. He glowers. Arms crossed. Not happy.

EXT. PREMIERE THEATER - LATER

People stream out of the theater. Among them, Demi and Emilio.

DEMI
I'm gonna find the bathroom.

Demi walks off, leaving Emilio alone. After a moment, Laura walks up.

She nods towards Steve, standing across the carpet and talking to reporters.

LAURA
You hear about Armando? How he's gonna lose the eye? You were right, Steve really is out of control.

EMILIO
Yeah, it's-- it's pretty fucked up.

LAURA
Hey, sorry if things got a little weird there for a minute.

EMILIO
Don't worry about it.

LAURA
I didn't mean anything by it. Just-- wanted to have some fun.

She reaches out and clasps his shoulder. Her hand lingers there a little too long. Emilio laughs. Shakes his head.

EMILIO
Jesus, you're still at it. You know, you and Steve...

LAURA

What? What, you think we're the same or some shit?

EMILIO

He thinks he's doing what he has to do to stay on top. You're think you can fuck your way to the top.

LAURA

And what do you think?

EMILIO

That you're both crazy. Love's what matters. I'm gonna propose to Demi.

LAURA

Shit. Really?

EMILIO

What can I say? She's the one. Take it easy, Laura.

Emilio walks off towards Demi. Laura watches him go. She lights a lonely cigarette and begins to smoke. Emilio reaches Demi. Puts an arm around her. Kisses her. She smiles.

DEMI

What's up?

EMILIO

Nothing. Just missed you.

They share a quick kiss, and walk off.

ACROSS THE RED CARPET -- People continue to stream out of the theater. Steve walks up to Dino.

STEVE

Friend, it wasn't the easiest path but we pushed on through and at the end of the day I think it came out pretty well. Just wanted to thank you for believing in me.

Dino glares at Steve for a full five seconds.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What?

DINO

You think the movie came out good, do you? Huh? You think people liked it?

(MORE)

DINO (CONT'D)

People were LAUGHING AT US, you buffoon of a man! I know I said we'd make money even if it was shit but... Christ, what shit it is.

STEVE

Dino, I-- You really don't think people liked it? Because I think it's a fun ride, the music is great, it's--

DINO

Where's your wife, Steve?! Where's your family? Why aren't they here? Answer me that question, then I'll listen to your opinions. Until then--

He SPITS on the ground.

DINO (CONT'D)

Good day to you.

He marches off.

REPORTERS begin snapping pictures-- flashbulbs illuminating Steve's forlorn look.

INSERT - A TV SCREEN

TWO ENTERTAINMENT REPORTERS, JANET AND CHETT, look to camera.

CHETT

...the toddler has been successfully apprehended. In other news, popular author Stephen King may be the Master of Terror, but the scariest thing this weekend was the box office for his new film.

JANET

That's right, *Maximum Overdrive*, the new comet killer truck Emilio Estevez film, opened to a mere three million dollars, and is unlikely to recoup its production budget. Speaking about the film, Leonard Maltin told me the movie, quote, raped him in his eyeholes, unquote.

CHETT

That's right, Janet, but that was supposed to be off the record.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

INT. BAR - NIGHT

This news report plays on a TV in a dingy bar. Steve sits alone at the bar, watching the news with visible despair.

The BARTENDER sets a pint glass in front of Steve and begins to pour tequila into it. He fills it all the way up.

BARTENDER

As requested, fifteen fingers of vodka.

STEVE

Thanks.

The Bartender walks away. Steve picks up the pint glass and looks at it sadly.

Then... He begins to chug. He keeps chugging. And soon it's all gone. Steve stays seated at the bar for about ten seconds--

THEN JUMPS TO HIS FEET and sprints to the back door.

EXT. BAR / BACK PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Steve stumbles through the back door into an empty lot behind the bar. He leans towards the wall and--

VOMITS.

Panting, he stays bent over, hands on his knees.

JACK TORRANCE (O.S.)

Not feeling too hot, huh, champ?

Steve stands slowly and turns around.

Jack Torrance, in all his grinning lunatic third act of *The Shining* glory, stands before him.

STEVE

What the fuck are you doing here?

Jack grins a terrible grin, reaches behind him--

And pulls out a beer. He holds it out to Steve.

JACK TORRANCE

Thought you could use a beer, ace.

Cautiously, Steve takes the beer.

STEVE
Is this one real?

JACK TORRANCE
Come on, now, Steve. Is any of this
real?

Steve looks at the beer, cold vapor misting appetizingly through the already-opened mouth of the bottle. He lifts it to his lips.

Then stops.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)
What's the matter?

STEVE
I don't know if I want it anymore.

JACK TORRANCE
What do you mean?

STEVE
I don't want it anymore. I want to go home. I want to roll over in the middle of the night and put my arm around my wife. And have breakfast with my family. That's all I should have fucking ever wanted.

JACK TORRANCE
That's fine, but let's not do anything rash--

STEVE
I DON'T WANT IT!

Steve SMASHES THE BOTTLE on the wall behind him. Beer explodes onto the wall. He holds the broken mouth of the bottle in his hand.

With his other hand he reaches into his coat. He pulls out a flask and THROWS IT TO THE GROUND.

STEVE (CONT'D)
And I don't want that!

He pulls several joints out of his coat and throws them to the ground.

STEVE (CONT'D)
And I don't want those!

He pulls out a bottle of pills and throws it to the ground.

STEVE (CONT'D)
And I don't want those, either!

CARRIE (O.S.)
(morose)
Why not?

Steve WHIRLS AROUND and sees a girl in a blood-soaked prom dress walking towards him. CARRIE (17), of course.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Why not? Are they bad? Are they bad like mama? Are they bad like my dirtypillows?

JACK TORRANCE
She has a point there, Steve.
What's so bad about all of it?
After all, PAL, you created all of us with that shit -- do you regret creating us?

STEVE
Of course not, I love all of you!

JACK TORRANCE
But you want us to disappear?
Forever?

STEVE
No. But there's such a thing as over-indulgence.

JACK TORRANCE
What a crazy thing to say.

He pulls out another beer, holds it out to Steve.

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)
Drink the beer, Freaky Stevey.

STEVE
No.

JACK TORRANCE
Well then. I guess I don't have any other choice.

Jack reaches behind him and produces A MASSIVE ROQUE Mallet (the weapon he uses in the book *The Shining*, not the movie).

He raises it into the air as if he's gonna BRING IT DOWN ON STEVE--

JACK TORRANCE (CONT'D)
HERE'S JOHNNY!

STEVE
That line's from the movie, you son
of a bitch!

Steve lashes out with the broken neck of his beer bottle--
AND SLASHES JACK'S THROAT.

A garish slit appears in Jack's neck as BLOOD SQUIRTS ALL
OVER STEVE'S FACE.

Jack grabs at his throat -- then collapses dead to the
ground.

Steve *breathes heavily* in disbelief. *Suddenly*, his breath
catches in his throat. His eyes BULGE. He starts to TURN
BLUE.

Steve turns and sees Carrie staring at him, one hand raised--
she's using her telekinetic powers.

Steve reaches into his waistband, PULLS OUT A GUN, and shoots
Carrie in the forehead.

Her blood exits her head in a thick ropey spatter.

STEVE (CONT'D)
That's why I killed you the first
time, YOU CUNT!

ANNIE WILKES (O.S.)
Hey now! Where did you get a gun?

Steve turns to see ANNIE WILKES coming towards him, an axe in
her hand.

ANNIE WILKES (CONT'D)
You didn't have a gun before!
That's cheating, you got that gun
from COCKADOODIE NOWHERE! You--

STEVE
You got a thing for writers? Get a
load of me!

He SHOOTs-- but the gun clicks empty. Annie LAUGHS and swings
her axe.

Panicked, Steve brings his hand up and GRABS the handle, stopping its descent.

Steve wrestles the axe from her hands, swings, and BURIES the axe in her neck.

Blood. Sprays. Everywhere. Steve is coated head to toe.

Annie FALLS DEAD, her body landing on top of Carrie's body.

Out of nowhere, Steve's shirt CATCHES FIRE.

He screams, RIPS HIS FLAMING SHIRT OFF (revealing an unappealing rug of chest hair), and turns to see CHARLIE MCGEE (8), the little girl from *Firestarter*, pointing at him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What, you think I've never written
a child's death before?!

Steve runs at Charlie, JUMPS, and kicks her straight in the face. She falls to the ground.

A CAR REVS offscreen.

Steve turns to see a driverless white and red 1958 PLYMOUTH FURY rolling towards him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

CHRISTINE!

Christine accelerates.

Steve turns and RUNS AWAY across the parking lot. He reaches the edge of the parking lot and disappears into A TALL THICKET OF REEDS.

EXT. CREEK BED - CONTINUOUS

Steve runs through thick reeds, batting them out of his way.

BEHIND HIM, Christine PLOWS into the reeds, her headlights illuminating the night as she searches for Steve.

Steve comes up against the edge of a creek -- not very wide, but too wide to jump across.

Christine BURSTS out of the reeds and speeds towards Steve. Steve JUMPS out of the way--

And Christine SMASHES nose first into the creek. Her engine SPUTTERS and shuts off.

Steve stumbles away from the car.

LOUD FRANTIC BARKING sounds nearby. Steve whirls around to see--

A MASSIVE SAINT BERNARD barreling towards him. CUJO.

STEVE

Cujo! Wait! Good dog! Fuck!

Steve turns and runs.

Steve barrels through the reeds, running along the edge of the creek, looking back over shoulder as Cujo gains on him.

The chase continues, frantic.

Cujo is fifteen feet behind.

Ten feet.

Five.

IT'S HOPELESS.

Steve digs into his pants pocket, pulls out a MASSIVE BOWIE KNIFE, and whirls around. CUJO LEAPS. Steve swings the knife up and BURIES IT IN CUJO'S CHEST.

Cujo's weight PLOWS into Steve. The two of them fall back--

And SPLASH into the shallow creek.

Cujo *pants heavily*, then dies on top of Steve. Steve tries to shove him off. He can't do it. Too weak.

Splish. Splish. Splosh. Footsteps coming towards him. Steve looks up to see THE MAN IN BLACK pacing towards him. He comes to a stop standing over Steve, leering down.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Alright. You got me. You gonna kill me?

THE MAN IN BLACK

(Considers. Then--)

Nah. You got more living to do. But remember. I always come back.

He taps his head. Then turns and walks away.

Steve slumps back, his body in the water, his head resting on the opposite bank--

And falls asleep.

EXT. CREEK - MORNING

Steve, still asleep, moans and rolls from side to side. His eyes twitch. Suddenly, HE JOLTS AWAKE--

And sees that his shirtless torso is submerged in the creek.

Shockingly, there are no Plymouth Furies or Saint Bernards anywhere to be seen.

Steve looks at his hand -- and sees a mostly empty bottle of Scotch. One swallow left. He lifts the bottle to his mouth--

Then DROPS IT INTO THE CREEK instead.

He watches as it floats

they all float down here

away down the creek.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Steve walks towards his car. He picks his discarded shirt up off the ground and RINGS water out of it.

EXT. BANGOR, MAINE - LATER

Steve cruises through Maine. Looking around. He passes liquor shops, the high school, Dan's office, other familiar sights. A sad smile on his face.

EXT. KING HOME - LATER

Steve parks. He takes a deep breath, exits his car, and walks up to the front door.

INT. KING HOME / KITCHEN - SAME

Tabby sits at the kitchen table, reading a newspaper, when she hears A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

She gets up, opens the door, and sees Steve standing there. Tabby SIGHS. And swings the door shut. Steve reaches out a hand to stop it.

STEVE

No, wait!

Tabby reopens the door.

TABBY

What?

He hesitates. He doesn't know what to say. Hasn't thought this far ahead.

STEVE

My movie tanked.

TABBY

I know. I saw it.

STEVE

What'd you think?

TABBY

It was a piece of shit.

STEVE

Really?

TABBY

...No. I enjoyed it. I liked the part when the kid got run over by the steamroller.

STEVE

It was actually an industrial street cleaner. But that's beside the point.

(beat)

I tried, Tabby. I really tried to make it great.

TABBY

You think you might know where you went wrong?

Steve looks at her sadly.

STEVE

Yeah. Yeah, I think I do.

Tabby looks at his dripping clothes.

TABBY

You're soaking wet.

STEVE

Yeah. I spent the night in a creek
with a bottle of Scotch in my hand.

Tabby SIGHS AGAIN, swings the door shut. AGAIN, he stops it.

STEVE (CONT'D)

But I'm done!

She reopens the door.

TABBY

What?

STEVE

I'm done. Tabby, I'm done. I want
to come home.

TABBY

You've only been sober for, what,
six hours?

STEVE

Yeah.

TABBY

That's hardly a solid sobriety.

STEVE

I know. But I'm done. I stabbed
Cujo.

TABBY

Do I even want to know what that
means?

STEVE

I doubt it.

Tabby looks past his large glasses to his eyes.

TABBY

You're done.

STEVE

I'm done.

TABBY

You're done?

STEVE

I'm done. And we're gonna fix all
of it. You and me. We'll deal with
the lawsuit.

(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)

We'll get this marriage back up on its fucking feet, Tabby. It's not over. I'm done with the drugs. But I'm not done with you.

TABBY

Then I guess you'd better come in.

She opens the door wider. Steve comes in.

INT. STEVE'S OFFICE - LATER

Tabby stands in the middle of the office with a trash bag.

Steve opens a desk drawer, pulls out a bottle of bourbon, drops it in the trash bag.

Steve reaches under the desk, pulls out one of those dispensary canisters of weed that has been *velcroed* to the underside of the desk, and drops it in the trash.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - LATER

Joe sits on the couch. Steve enters.

STEVE

What's on TV?

JOE

Jaws 2. I guess you can watch with me. If you want.

STEVE

I'd love to, buddy, but I'm actually busy with a project.

JOE

Of course you are.

Steve pulls out the manuscript of Joe's short story. The pages are covered in notes.

STEVE

It's this short story of yours. I was looking through it, and I thought you might want some, I don't know, friendly feedback?

Joe tries to suppress a smile-- and can't quite do it. He wordlessly slides over on the couch. Steve sits beside him. They turn to the first page of the story.

INT. STEVE'S OFFICE - LATER

Steve enters his office and shuts the door.

It's quiet, being alone.

Steve walks to his desk and sits down in front of the typewriter.

He opens a drawer, looks inside. One page of manuscript is on top. A page from *The Shining*. The name "JACK TORRANCE" stands out to him. Steve looks around the room. No Jack around. Steve smiles.

He slots a piece of paper into the typewriter. And begins to type. The words come slowly at first, then faster and faster.

INSERT -- THE FIRST PAGE -- *"It. By Stephen King."*

INSERT -- THE NEXT PAGE -- *"Chapter One. After the Flood. 1. The terror, which would not end for another twenty-eight years - if it ever did end - began, so far as I know or can tell, with a boat made from a sheet of newspaper floating down a gutter swollen with rain."*

Steve types with renewed vigor. As he types, a tear forms in his eye and rolls down his cheek. He wipes it away and continues typing.

INT. BANGOR PUBLIC LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Steve stands in front of a small podium. A SMALL CROWD OF EAGER FANS sits in folding chairs. Steve's family front and center.

Several manuscript pages are spread in front of Steve. He READS ALOUD from them.

STEVE

'They float,' it growled, 'they float, Georgie, and when you're down here with me, you'll float, too.' George's shoulder socked against the cement of the curb and Dave Gardener, who had stayed home from his job at The Shoeboat that day because of the flood, saw only a small boy in a yellow rain slicker, a small boy who was screaming and writhing in the gutter with muddy water surfing over his face and making his screams sound bubbly.

Tabby smiles up at Steve from the front row.

EXT. BANGOR PUBLIC LIBRARY - SUNSET

Steve and Tabby walk to their car parked behind the library.

TABBY

Well I think that went really well.

STEVE

I think so too. I think they're
really gonna like it.

(beat)

Hey Tabby?

TABBY

Yeah?

STEVE

You mind waiting here for a second?
I'd like a second to myself.

She hesitates.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Not myself and drugs. Just myself.

TABBY

I'm sorry. I guess we're still
getting the trust back. Go on,
honey.

Steve walks to the driver's seat of the car.

TABBY (CONT'D)

You're taking the car?

STEVE

Yes, my love, but I shall return
for you.

He blows her a kiss.

EXT. BANGOR PUBLIC LIBRARY - SUNSET

The sun is beginning to set on the horizon. The sky is just
starting to look ridiculously beautiful... Or it would be if
not for some clouds in the sky.

An access ladder extends up the side of the library.

Steve's car ZOOMS INTO FRAME and parks below the ladder. Steve gets out. Clambers onto the roof of his car. Grabs onto the ladder. Begins to climb.

EXT. BANGOR PUBLIC LIBRARY / ROOF - MOMENTS LATER

Steve walks to the edge of the roof of the library and looks out at the sunset.

It's a pretty decent sunset. But there are some clouds blocking the spots that should be really awesome.

This sunset, it shines a glow over the miles and miles of Bangor, Maine. It's beautiful. But as beautiful as it should be? Hard to say.

Hard to know, if there's uncertainty in heart of the person looking.

Stephen King looks out at this half-spectacular, half-shitty sunset for a long, long, long, long time.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END